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THE TIMES

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No. 66,167 SATURDAY APRIL 4 1998 http://www.the-times.co.uk

Week's paid paternity leave for all fathers

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

WORKING fathers are to get one week's paid paternity leave, funded by the state, as part of Labour plans to put family life at the centre of government policy.

Under the proposals, backed by Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, fathers would receive a statutory minimum paternity payment, probably on a par with statutory maternity pay of £57.20. Employers, who are expected to be reimbursed by the state for around 90 per cent of this cost, could then opt to top up this payment.

"We want to send a message to women that men should be by their side when they give birth," a minister said.

The proposed measure would complement and build up efforts by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, to bolster family life while helping parents to combine child-care with work.

Within the European Union, only the three Scandinavian states provide a right to paid paternity leave of two weeks or more. Belgium and France offer fathers three days' paid paternity leave. In Spain fathers get two days' paid leave on the birth of a child, but the mother may chose to transfer up to four weeks of her paid maternity leave to the father.

Ms Harman and Social Security sources declined to comment on the paternity plans yesterday. But *The Times* has learnt that the proposals would be introduced in addition to plans already in the pipeline to guarantee three months' unpaid parental leave for all working parents, both mothers and fathers. Unpaid parental leave will be introduced in December 1999 when Britain adopts the European Commission's Social Chapter.

In addition to giving employees the right to three months' unpaid leave on the birth or adoption of a child, the directive will also guarantee protection from dismissal for taking parental leave or applying to take it and will ensure that workers can return to the same job, or its equivalent, at the end of the absence.

Joanna Wade, legal officer with the campaigning childcare group Maternity Alliance, welcomed the proposals.

"Paid paternity leave would represent a major step forward. This is not just a touchy-feely issue. It is about equality. Women will never be equal in the workplace until both parents are able to be involved in childcare," she said.

Dr Sebastian Kraemer, a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist at the Tavistock clinic in London, said it was essential for a child's well-being that fathers were able to take an active role in caring for them from the beginning of their lives.

"There is no reason, apart from custom, for fathers to be a stranger in the nursery. Fathers are often made to feel second-class citizens when babies are born, but they should be more involved," he said.

Research issued by the Department of Trade and Industry shows that only 31 per cent of workplaces allow their male employees paid paternity leave. Fewer than a quarter of companies offer some form of unpaid parental leave.

Britain still lags far behind many other European countries in child-oriented employment policies. Women are entitled to six weeks' maternity leave on 90 per cent of their salary and 12 weeks on £57.70 in Britain. This compares with 14 weeks on 100 per cent of salary in Germany, 16 weeks on 84 per cent in France, 16 weeks on 75 per cent in Spain, 20 weeks on 80 per cent in Italy and 28 weeks on 90 per cent in Denmark.

It takes two, page 2



ARTHUR POLLAK/AP



A matching quilted baby carrier became the latest fashion accessory at Isaac Mizrahi's 1998 autumn show in New York. The model Giselle borrowed her 18-month-old co-star from a friend of the designer

Peers out as rural alliance seeks new image

BY PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON

THE Countryside Alliance, the umbrella group that organised last month's successful protest rally in London, was in turmoil last night after dropping big landowners from its board.

Out go the Duke of Westminster, Earl Peel and the Earl of Stockton. Their replacements include businessmen and journalists with a remit to shake the countryside free of its tweeds and Barbour image. The alliance will hold a special general meeting at the Royal Geographical Society in London on Tuesday to approve the changes. The new leadership is concerned that the fox-hunting lobby is preparing to sabotage the meeting. The hunters fear that they are being sacrificed in favour of more "politically acceptable" countryside issues.

The restructuring of the alliance will see the board cut from 24 to ten. Other members who will lose their place include Lord Steel of Aikwood and Eric Bettelheim, the American lawyer who was a driving force behind the rally.

Seven new names will be put forward on Tuesday, including Charles Wilson, a former Editor of *The Times* and a former executive at The Mirror Group, and Caroline Tisdall, a former journalist at *The Guardian*.

Mr Bettelheim said: "Naturally there is a anxiety about change, but the new organisation will be more reflective of general political opinion."

Death of racing favourite blights Aintree

BY RICHARD EVANS RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE horse *One Man*, the most popular steeplechaser in training, died after a fall at Aintree yesterday, on the eve of the Martel Grand National.

The grey's death stunned racegoers and prompted fears that animal rights protesters would compound security problems facing 500 police by demonstrating at the racecourse today.

***One Man's* flamboyant style of jumping made him a favourite among National Hunt fans and there was a gasp from the record 30,000 crowd when he barely took off at the ninth on the Mildmay course. He hit the fence and broke his right hind tibia. He was put down.**

The level of anti-terrorist security at Aintree was underlined yesterday when a briefcase found by police was blown up. It belonged to a jockey's valet.

A third of Britain's adult population is set to bet £65 million on this year's race as *Rough Quest* attempts to become the first horse since *Red Rum* to win more than one Grand National.

FULL GRAND NATIONAL GUIDE PAGE 31



WEATHER 32
CROSSWORD 32
COURT & SOCIAL 24
LETTERS 23
OBITUARIES 25
SIMON JENKINS 22
THEATRES 21
BUSINESS NEWS 27-31
UNIT TRUSTS 47
SHARE PRICES 26
WEEKEND MONEY 48-64
SPORT 33-46

WEEKEND
GARDENING 13, 14
PROPERTY 9-12
TRAVEL 27-35
FAITH 18

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RAC chief quits over plan to float rescue services

BY JASON NISSE

STRIFE echoed through the marble halls of The Royal Automobile Club in Pall Mall yesterday after Jeffrey Rose, the RAC's chairman, was dismissed for writing to members proposing that they float off its roadside rescue businesses and reap a windfall of £20,000 each.

Mr Rose, who has headed the organisation for 17 years, was forced to resign after the board of the RAC reacted angrily to his call for an extraordinary meeting to approve his plans to "demutualise" the motor side and float it on the stock market.

About 12,000 full members of the RAC, who pay between £454 and £623 a year to use the Pall Mall club and its two golf courses in Surrey, would pick up £20,000 each from any float. The 5.7 million motorists, who pay £260 million a year for the RAC's roadside services, would not receive a penny.

The scheme would not have changed the way the actual club in Pall Mall operates, where members can swim, play squash and stay over for a mere £50 a night.

Mr Rose's letters — delayed because of the central London postal strike — dropped on members' doormats yesterday morning.

A board meeting of the RAC was hastily arranged in the afternoon at which the board told Mr Rose that writing to members, without consulting the board beforehand, made his position untenable.

"The letter was written without the knowledge or agreement of the committee of The Royal Automobile Club or the board of RAC Motoring Services," said the RAC. Mr Rose had been due to retire next month anyway. Brian McGivern, the vice-chairman, has stepped into the breach temporarily.

However the RAC did not dismiss Mr Rose's plans outright, saying the issues raised were complex and regularly debated by the board. The RAC took legal advice last year about who would own the receipts of any float of the motoring side. Counsel's option was that the club members not the motorists would get the cash. Even if a float goes ahead, there is no opportunity for carpetbagging — new members have to be proposed by two existing members and there is a waiting list of at least six months.

The demutualisation issue has been debated within the RAC at least twice in the last 12 months — once when it sold its insurance side for £58 million and then when it bought BSM, the motoring school, for £54 million.

Members are divided on the issue. Sir Robin Day, the television presenter, said he had thrown his copy of the letter in the bin. However Adrian Lithgow, a management consultant, said he looked forward to his windfall and was putting the champagne on ice.

Commentary, page 29

New watchdog to control councils

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

CORRUPT councillors and town hall officials are to be rooted out by independent watchdogs appointed by Whitehall in a Government drive to clean up councils.

The new regulatory bodies, to be based in each region, will have the power to investigate council members and officers suspected of misconduct and to censure, suspend or, ultimately, ban them from office.

The proposals, to be unveiled next week by Hilary Armstrong, the Local Government Minister, have been produced in response to Lord Nolan's report on standards in local government, published last year. They follow a string of disclosures about Labour councillors in its northern strongholds of Glasgow, Hull, and Doncaster.

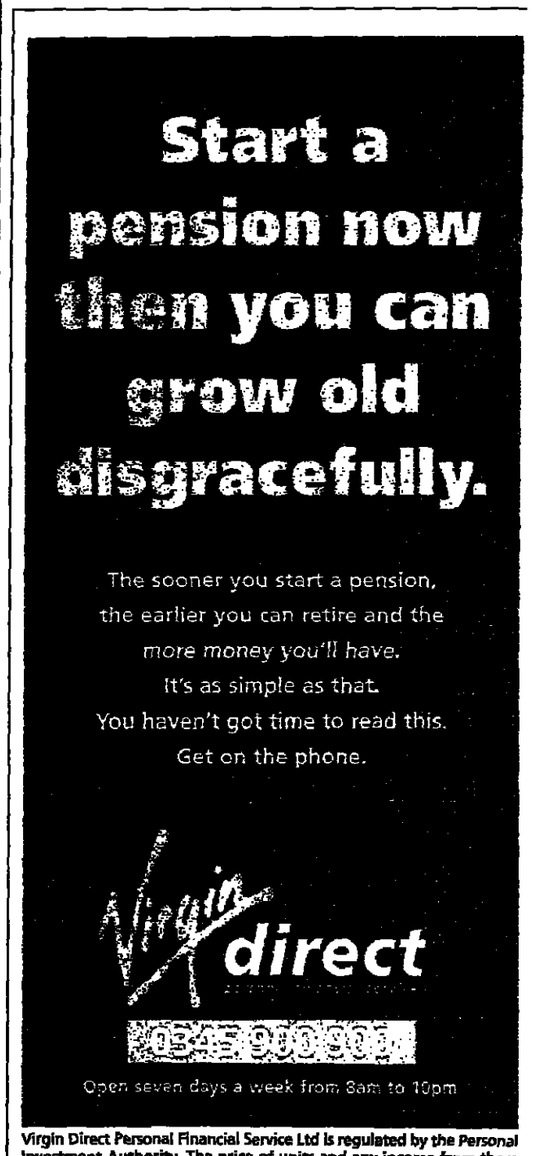
A stringent national code of conduct for local government will also be introduced along with a "whistleblowers' charter" for employees to report suspected malpractice without fear of recrimination.

The bodies will form the centrepiece of a Government initiative, led personally by the Prime Minister who is anxious to restore public confidence in town halls.

Last month Mr Blair said that the Government would be taking powers to tackle underperforming, ailing and inefficient councils by sending in hit squads of local government experts, accountants and businessmen to take over their management.

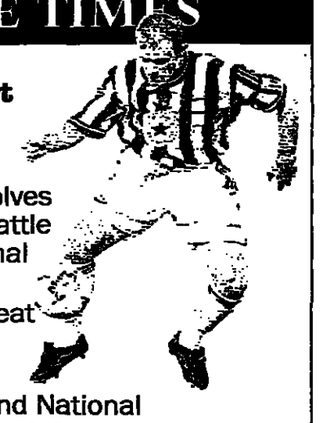
The proposals, contained in a consultation paper, will stop short of abolishing surcharges, which Lord Nolan described as "unsatisfactory, inflexible and inconsistent". Those guilty of misconduct will still be ordered to pay restitution, sometimes millions of pounds, to the councils they represent or work for.

Each of the 450 authorities in England, Scotland and Wales will be able to add its own rules to the national code of conduct. The three registers of members' interests will be replaced with a single, compulsory register.



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RUGBY

Can France beat Wales for the Grand Slam?

Plus: The Grand National

TUESDAY

How to overcome depression by Tim Lott

WEDNESDAY

Inter//face

IT and the IT girl. Supermodel Caprice on males and e-mail



Plus: Crème – best for jobs

THURSDAY

Books: Peter Ackroyd on Joan, the she-Pope plus reviews by Roger Scruton and Helen Dunmore

FRIDAY

Rock and Pop

SATURDAY

In your 100-page glossy magazine



SIMPLY BLUE: Mick Hucknall on lost love and the Britpop backlash

Blair plans peace concert date

By Philip Webster and Martin Fletcher

TONY BLAIR showed his cautious optimism over the prospects of a peace deal in Northern Ireland yesterday by disclosing that he intends to attend an open-air concert by Sir Elton John in Belfast five days after the planned referendum on the province's future.

His spokesman called the event, to be staged on May 27 in the grounds of Stormont Castle, venue of the all-party talks, a "peace concert".

After their third meeting of the day in London last night both Mr Blair and Bertie Ahern, his Irish counterpart, reported progress on some of the remainign difficulties. An official said there had been a "clear nudge forward" although negotiations will continue over the weekend.

A joint statement from both governments said: "Further progress has been made and they remain of a view that with realsitic negotiation an agreement can be made."

Mr Blair and Mr Ahern had a conference call with George Mitchell, the Belfast talks chairman, so that they could brief him directly on the state of play before he issued his first draft of a peace settlement to the party leaders last night.

Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland secretary, insisted that a settlement was possible by next Thursday's deadline. She said she believed the negotiations would go "right to the edge".

"There are areas of differences but areas I think can settled within the next six days," she said. "We are still negotiating the detail: everybody is now engaging in the real crunch issues. Most people are working through the weekend." Mr Blair's spokesman said the problems were not so much between the governments as other parties involved in the talks: "We and the Irish are trying to sort out the differences."

Sir Elton's concert will be the first staged in the grounds of Stormont and follows an initiatiive by Dr Mowlam who wants them accessible to the public. Officials hope it will begin to erode Stormont's image as the bastion of Protestant rule and open up the parliament building with its surrounding parkland. Nearly 15,000 people are expected to pay £25 a head. Sir Elton's fee, and all profits, will be used to build educational facilities in the grounds. Dr Mowlam said: "I am delighted Elton is coming to Stormont. It is going to be a spectacular event which thousands of fans will enjoy."

Meanwhile a potential sectarian clash was averted yesterday when the independent Parades Commission banned a loyalist Apprentice Boys march down Belfast's predominantly nationalist Lower Ormeau Road on Easter Monday where violence erupted during the same parade two years ago. This was the first disputed parade of the year, and the first ruling by the Commission using criteria broader than simply public order.

□ A 41-year-old man appeared in court in Dublin yesterday in connection with the massive car bomb found at the ferry port of Dun Laoghaire. Larry Keane, from County Kildare, was charged with unlawful possession of explosives and remanded in custody.

BLOODY SUNDAY INQUIRY OPENS IN LONDONDERRY

By Martin Fletcher and Michael Evans

THE new Bloody Sunday inquiry yesterday threatened to rock the Establishment by asking the Government for every classified document relating to the shootings on January 30, 1972, and making them public.

The inquiry is to request all relevant documents from Downing Street, the Cabinet, the Ministry of Defence, the old Stormont government and other agencies. Even papers covered by the 75-year confidentiality rule will be published unless the Government can make a "very compelling" case that publication is against the public interest.

"Anything material we want to see and will make public," Lord Saville of Newdigate, the chairman, announced as he formally opened the inquiry at Londonderry's Guildhall yesterday.

The documents should finally reveal whether the soldiers simply ran amok or were acting on the orders of their commanders or politicans implementing a new "get tough" policy. They should reveal why the notoriously tough 1 Para was deployed from Belfast to Londonderry and whether army commanders were aware of police intelligence that the IRA had withdrawn from the Bogside before the march.

Lieutenant Colonel Derek Wilford, the paratroopers' commander that day, has insisted he was acting on "orders from the top", and Lord Saville did not rule out summoning Sir Edward Heath, the Prime Minister at the time, to testify. Lord Saville left open the key question of whether the paratroopers would be offered immunity from prosecution if they testified, but said no one would have to incriminate themselves.

Hewitt's fiancée held over letters

By Carol Midgley

JAMES HEWITT'S former fiancée was arrested yesterday over the alleged theft of intimate letters written to him by Diana, Princess of Wales.

Anna Ferretti, 39, was detained at Waterloo station, London, by plainclothes police officers after claims by *The Mirror* that she tried to sell 62 letters to the newspaper for £150,000. She is believed to have been ready to travel to France at the time of arrest.

Mr Hewitt has made a formal complaint to police about the alleged theft and friends say that he is almost certain to demand the return of his property. *The Mirror*, which did not publish the letters, has handed them to the late Princess's staff at Kensington Palace.

In yesterday's edition of *The Mirror*, Ms Ferretti was quoted as saying that she was relieved the letters had been sent to the palace. "I now see how stupid I have been, but I am also very relieved they are back with their rightful owners. They are beautiful letters written by a caring woman who was deeply in love," she says in the newspaper.

The Princess is said to have asked Mr Hewitt to burn her letters, written on blue airmail paper and posted to army bases where he was serving with the Life Guards. They are believed to have been taken from a safe at Mr Hewitt's home in Devon while he was in Spain.

The Royal family may now face a court battle over the ownership of the letters. The Princess's family has been warned that Mr Hewitt has a legal right to their return, even though the Princess's estate retains the copyright. A Kensington Palace spokesman said that he could make no comment on Ms Ferretti's arrest.

The letters are now in safekeeping at the palace, pending possible legal action and, if charges are brought, could become exhibits in a criminal court case.

□ A company that conducts walking tours of London has created two that take in places associated with the Princess, including Dodi Fayed's Mayfair home.

ROBIN MAYES



Calm prevails outside the RAC Club in Pall Mall yesterday despite a furore over a suggestion that the roadside rescue business be floated on the market. Report, page 1

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blair cheers Kohl with cellar discovery

The Government's well-stocked wine cellars saved Tony Blair's blushes last night after a challenge from Helmut Kohl. While celebrating the German Chancellor's 68th birthday at Downing Street on Thursday, the Prime Minister was put on the spot over a present.

Herr Kohl bet him that he could not find a bottle of rare Quinta do Noval port made in the year of his birth, 1930. Mr Blair could not, so he handed the task to the Foreign Office. A frantic search of London cellars failed to bear fruit. But in the Government's Whitehall cellars, officials found two cases, not of the 1930, but of the 1931 vintage.

Honours just about even, Mr Blair presented Herr Kohl with the bottle yesterday. It was worth 2s 1d when it was bought in 1939 but today would fetch just over £1,000, according to experts. Connoisseurs said that 1931 and 1963 were the best years for port this century.

Escape boy wins hearing

A 13-year-old boy who spent a week living rough in London after jumping out of a taxi on its way to Heathrow to put him on a flight back to his American father has won the legal right to have his feelings in the matter heard. He was determined to stay with his mother and sister in Britain, the Court of Appeal heard. Under the Hague Convention, he may escape being sent back to America.

Legal complaints rise

Complaints against solicitors have risen by almost one third in the past five months, according to new figures to be published soon by the Law Society. Its forthcoming annual report will show complaints averaging more than 3,000 a month between September 1997 and February 1998, an annual rise of some 30 per cent over the same period in 1996. The rise is reported in this week's Law Society Gazette.

Drugs charge star bailed

John Alford, a former star of the ITV series *London's Burning*, denied supplying cocaine and cannabis when he appeared at Bow Street Magistrates court yesterday. Alford, of Hadley Wood, North London, was charged with supplying drugs at the Savoy Hotel in London on August 13 last year. He was given unconditional bail and ordered to return to court on May 15.

Family's 70mph escape



A mother and her four children escaped with minor injuries from a crash in which a six-year-old girl was catapulted through the window of the car, which rolled over four times after a tyre blew at 70mph on the M3. Amanda Wemyss, aged 28, from Portsmouth, Hampshire, learned from a witness five minutes later that her daughter had been thrown onto grass. The other children were unhurt.

News chief's new role

Douglas Flynn has been appointed managing director of News International plc, publisher of *The Times* and its sister papers, it was announced yesterday. Mr Flynn, formerly managing director of the company's newspaper division, will retain day-to-day responsibility for the newspapers but will also take on a broader role in the company becoming involved in other businesses.

Sex case inspector freed

A policeman accused of raping a 10-year-old girl in a health centre spa bath was yesterday found not guilty at Norwich Crown Court. Stephen Elliott-Hunter, 43, of Norwich, was also cleared of having sex with a girl under 16 and five charges of indecent assault. Mr Elliott-Hunter, now an inspector with Norfolk Police, was accused of offences against a girl and her sister between 1977 and 1986.

Prodi lifts the lid on Blair's Italian calls

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

THE Italian prime minister, Romano Prodi, blew the lid off his supposedly top secret talks with Tony Blair yesterday. The two men regularly call each other to discuss ... cats, dogs and the weather.

But what about Rupert Murdoch and his television deal?

A conversation two weeks ago in which Mr Blair was reported to have raised Mr Murdoch's bid to buy a network owned by Silvio Berlusconi caused a stir, with Mr Blair embarrassed by allegations that he was too close to the chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*. The Italian press even claimed that Mr Blair had "secretly" contacted Signor Prodi to discuss it.

While he was happy to reveal details about cats and dogs Signor Prodi was circumspect about more substantive matters. "I think if you don't take conversations as received in secret, you can't do politics, you can't make actions for your country. Why should I tell you what I talked about with Tony? What next, the next telephone call we shouldn't talk freely?"

While he appeared to confirm, though, that the bid had been mentioned in the now celebrated chat, he refused to disclose whether Mr Blair had lobbied for Mr Murdoch.

Signor Prodi told BBC Breakfast News: "We discussed at least six or seven issues ... when you have a long confidence, like Tony and me, we discuss everything, cats, dogs, weather, politics." He fully backed Mr Blair's insistence that Signor Prodi had called him.

"I called him and we had many, many issues to discuss. But I shall not tell you what we talked about."

Bringing up baby takes two

By Dominic Kennedy

PATERNITY LEAVE

WHEN Barry Clout learnt that he was to become the father of twins, he was grateful that his employer, Boots, offered paternity leave. Men working for the company are entitled to a week off with full pay, before or after the birth.

His girlfriend, Elizabeth Arden, 41, was in hospital for the babies' first ten days so he waited until she was ready to leave. Mr Clout began his first day of paternity leave driving Ms Arden, Joshua and Eleanor home to Nottingham.

The babies' grandparents live in Stockport and the West Country, and there are no aunts or uncles near to help. He spent the first week learning how to cope with the twins and becoming used to getting no sleep. "It takes two people to make a baby. It really takes two to bring them up. However much preparation you have done, you are still not ready when they finally arrive," said Mr Clout, 31, a personnel manager at head office, whose twins are seven weeks old.

"We take it in turns to look after them. Liz likes to have a wander round the shops to get out of the house. I sit there and get fraught when they both start screaming. During the night the babies wake up and cry together. We both get up together, take a baby each and can feed and change them in 45 minutes. It takes Liz an hour and a half to do them on her own."

At NatWest Bank, men get a week's paid paternity leave and can claim 29 weeks off unpaid if their manager agrees. David Sparrow, 34, head of retail banking network operations, based in the City of London, was glad of the entitlement when his wife Nicola, 29, had a Caesarean. "She couldn't do anything for herself," he said. "Somebody had to be at home to make sure she wasn't lifting anything or driving or shopping. It would have meant that one of our family would have had to have a holiday because our parents work full time. We live 200 miles away from them.

"The initial few weeks are very important. Jake is nine months old now, and he is equally happy with either of us. Right from the beginning I was able to bond, to get on with him and get to know him. When children shout and scream they usually go to one parent but he doesn't, he goes to either." Mr Sparrow believes that companies also benefit. "It's not just a case of saying, 'Oh Christ he is missing for a week.' There is a payback for employers because it helps people to have a more balanced life."

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ROYAL AIR FORCE ENGINEER

Hackers fined over porn

By Simon de Bruxelles

AN ESTATE agency that decided to advertise on the Internet found itself peddling more than property, a court was told yesterday. Two computer students with a grudge against the firm substituted hardcore pornography for the pictures of houses.

Yesterday the hackers were fined £3,500 after a judge said their prank could have done serious harm to the estate agents' reputation. House-hunters logging on to the Internet website to look for a new home were confronted instead with full-colour images of bizarre sex acts that the hackers had found elsewhere on the Internet. Cardiff Crown Court was told that Richard Airlie and Ian Morrison hacked into the website set up by the estate agency after losing out on a potentially lucrative computer contract.

Paul Hartley-Davies, prosecuting, said the computer students initially offered to improve the web pages of a large estate agents firm based in Hampshire. Airlie hacked into the website of Bridge's estate agents in Aldershot and Morrison then copied the pornographic pictures and substituted them for the pictures of luxury homes.

Airlie, 20, hacked in to the website from his home in Bearsden, Glasgow. Morrison, 20, operated from his home in Ashvale, Surrey. Both had been computing students at Caledonian University.

Dunn, of Bearsden, Glasgow, and Morrison both pleaded guilty to one charge under the Misuse of Computers Act. Morrison was also fined £1,250 and ordered to pay £550 in costs and compensation. He was given 100 hours community service.

Dunn was fined £1,000 and placed on community service for 100 hours. Airlie admitted two charges. Airlie was fined £1,250 and ordered him to pay £350 compensation to the estate agents and £200 costs. He was also ordered to do 130 hours community service.

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STUART RAMSON/GILL ALLEN

Betsey Johnson carries roses down the catwalk, with a model in a lingerie gown, at her show in New York this week; and a Johnson tulle dress. Johnson's first shop in Britain opens in West London next week

Why British women linger over lingerie

Underwear is not only out of the closet but flouncing down the catwalk. **Philip Delves Broughton** reports

BRITISH women spend twice as much on underwear — about £1 billion — as they did ten years ago and are catching up with their continental counterparts.

Underwear has not just come out of the closet but is prancing down the catwalk. Next week, the most flamboyant of the underwear queens, the American designer Betsey Johnson, opens her first shop in Britain. Her New York "Starlet" show featured models such as Naomi Campbell in corsets, gold-lamé, lacy peignoirs and more tulle than you would find at the Royal Ballet. Not to mention the rhinestone knickers.

Earlier in the season, Stella McCartney, chief designer at the French fashion house Chloe, once again made the theme of underwear as outerwear central to her show. The fashion pages and night clubs of London are now swimming with women in McCartney mode: floaty negligées worn under cashmere cardigans; glimpses of lace showing around cleavages. Where Madonna's conical-bra look was about sexual aggression, the underwear now hurtling out of shops is flirtatious and suggestive.

When Miss Johnson's store opens in the fashionable Brompton Cross intersection in West London, she will find she has some tough competition. Even Marks & Spencer, once a byword for modesty and comfort, now offers rackloads of gauzy, lacy anything-but-sensible underwear.

London has long been at the forefront of exotic underwear. In the 1970s Vivienne Westwood used the fleshpots of Soho as inspiration for her rubber and bondage outfits. Now her son, Joe Corre, 30, has found success with his Agent Provocateur shops, where he sells fancy bras, knickers, corsets — and fluffy bedroom slippers. "We get everyone in here from schoolgirls to old ladies," says Corre. "Women come here for something that is very sexual, good fun and high quality."

AtRigby and Peller, bra-makers to the Queen, the Spice Girls and Joan Collins among others, the made-to-measure bras cost up to £400. Last year, they opened a second shop in London and have seen their turnover double. "Our average sale is around £100 with women buying two or three bras," says Jill Kenton, the manager of Rigby and Peller."British women are now prepared to spend money on a good, well-fitting bra."

Where ten years ago, the average bra-size sold at Rigby and Peller was a 34B, it is now 34DD/E, a product of better lifestyles and nutrition — as well as women actually bothering to ask sales assistants to measure them for their correct bra size.

Aliza Reger, who runs the lingerie business founded by her mother Janet, says: "Underwear buying has been at fever pitch in the last two years. There is underwear as outerwear everywhere." Reger's soft-focus, romantic lines are very much back in fashion. She adds: "Men seem to prefer a subtle sexuality these days."

She is unsurprised that women are prepared to spend more than ever on underwear: "Underwear is very important to women: they are emotional pieces of clothing which make a girl feel good."

Mother who abducted baby from hospital told she faces prison

BY LIN JENKINS

A WOMAN who snatched a new-born baby from a hospital after faking a pregnancy was told by a judge yesterday that she could go to jail.

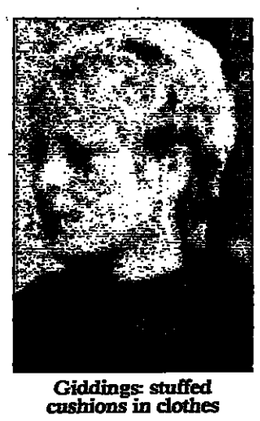
Denise Giddings, 33, a mother of three, admitted abducting Karli Hawthorne within hours of her birth from Basildon General Hospital, Essex, on December 5 last year. Judge Philip Klegg adjourned the case at Basildon Crown Court for pre-sentence reports.

Granting Giddings bail to an address that he ruled could not be disclosed, he told her: "The court is in no way implying that this court will impose a non-custodial sentence. All options are open."

Giddings, of Laindon, Essex, spoke only to confirm her name and plead guilty. Her estranged husband, Les, 43, who looks after their three boys aged 7, 10 and 12, sat in the public gallery.

Karli was snatched four hours after her birth as her mother, Tanya Godfrey, lay in a recovery room. It emerged later that Giddings had visited at least one other hospital on the morning of the abduciton. Police found a ticket for the car park of a Southend hospital in the front of her Range Rover.

A woman on the ward at Basildon saw Giddings hovering near Miss Godfrey's bed before taking the infant from her cot and leaving. The woman called the midwife and although hospital staff gave chase, Giddings had left the hospital and got into her Range Rover.



Giddings: stuffed cushions in clothes

She drove one-handed to Orsett Hospital five miles away, cradling the baby in her other arm. Once she had changed her clothes and abandoned a blonde wig and spectacles she had worn as a disguise, she telephoned her family, told them she had had her baby and asked them to take her home.

A neighbour, Fiona Harrington, became suspicious after Giddings had left for hospital in the morning — apparently heavily pregnant because of cushions stuffed into her clothing — and returned a few hours later with a baby. She contacted police after the abduction received widespread publicity and Karli was soon reunited with her mother.

Those who know Giddings well say they are astonished by the bizarre behaviour of a woman whose life revolved around her sons. She had no financial worries and was a sociable woman who often chatted with the other mothers in her road about their children and socialised with mothers at her boys' schools.

One friend, who did not wish to be named, said Giddings was haunted by what had happened and wondered if she would ever be able to have a normal life. "She is filled with remorse. I think she wonders how she will ever be able to be a normal mum again."

The baby is now four months old and is being christened next week at a church near the family home in Basildon. Her parents, Tanya Godfrey, 30, and Karl Hawthorne, 40, have asked WPC Sally Dunne, 33, who comforted them as they awaited news following the abduction, to be her godmother.

Colonel 'accused captain over ship sex'

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

A SENIOR Army officer accused the captain of *HMS Illustrious* of turning a blind eye to officers having sex aboard the aircraft carrier, a court martial in Aldershot heard yesterday.

Lieutenant-Colonel Keith Pople, 42, allegedly sent an anonymous letter to the ship in February last year, naming his ex-mistress, Lieutenant-Commander Karen Pearce, 34, and her new lover Lieutenant Nigel McTear. The prosecution claims the letter was part of Colonel Pople's alleged attempt to ruin his lover's career.

Lieutenant McTear and Commander Pearce both deny sleeping together in her cabin aboard *Illustrious* but admit having sex in a hire car in Malta in February 1996.

Colonel Pople, who was suspended from his post as Commanding Officer 4 Regiment Army Air Corps after the investigation began, is also accused of making an anonymous telephone call to the Defence Vetting Agency in Portsmouth complaining about the immorality of his former lover's affair with Lieutenant McTear.

He denies conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline and scandalous conduct unbecoming the character of an officer.

The case continues.

Top Gun leaves RAF to have baby

BY MICHAEL EVANS

The RAF confirmed yesterday that the first woman to become a Tornado GR1 bomber pilot is leaving to have a baby, as the Ministry of Defence announced a new £2.5 million advertising campaign for more female and ethnic minority recruits.

Flight Lieutenant Jo Salter, 29, who qualified three years ago as a fast jet pilot, will be entitled to 14 weeks' maternity leave and another 34 weeks of unpaid leave before returning to her job. It costs about £3 million to train a combat pilot.

Under previous policy — later overturned by the European courts — she would have been sacked for becoming pregnant. The MoD had to pay out more than £50 million in compensation to women who were dismissed from the three Services after becoming pregnant.

Flight Lieutenant Salter has had two flying tours as a Tornado pilot, based at Lossiemouth in Grampian, with 617 Squadron, and then at Valley in Gwynedd as an instructor. She currently has a desk job; if she returns to the RAF after maternity leave she will initially go back to a non-flying appointment.

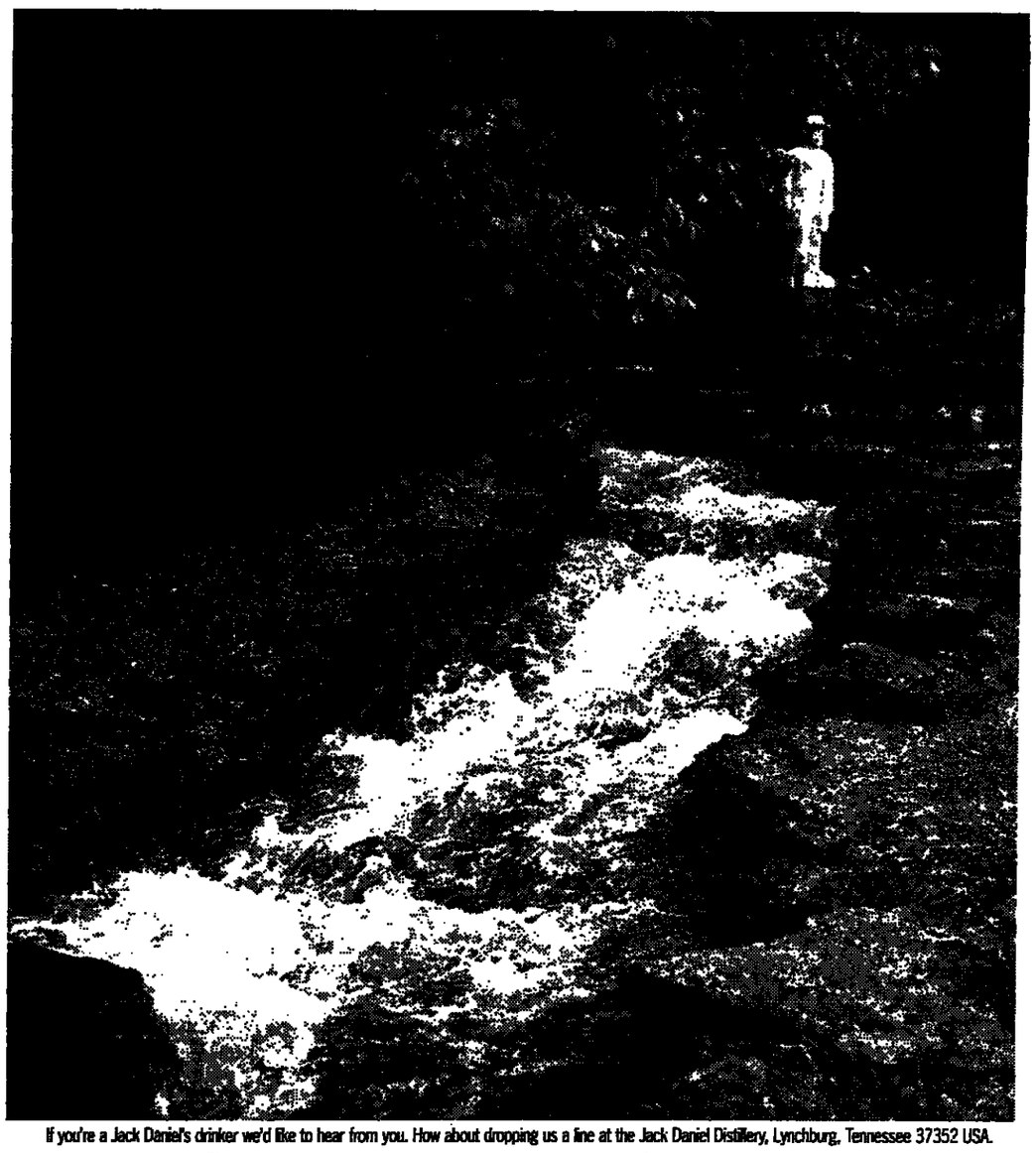


Salter: first female Tornado pilot

Yesterday John Reid, the Armed Forces Minister, announced that the latest recruiting figures for the Army showed that 3,200 women had been recruited in the last 12 months, which was 14 per cent of the new intake.

The new advertising campaign for the Army is being run by Saatchi and Saatchi and features a series of television, cinema, radio and billboard commercials. The campaign is aimed at promoting the Army as an equal opportunities employer and is intended to encourage more women and also young people from ethnic minorities to join the Service.

☐ The Royal Navy aircraft carrier *HMS Illustrious* is to be withdrawn from the Gulf task force maintaining the threat of military action against President Saddam Hussein, it was announced yesterday. George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, said the move next month would enable the ship to return to Britain for a long-planned refit starting in July. He also acknowledged that the carrier's Harrier GR7 jump-jets were having difficulty operating in the extreme heat of the summer.



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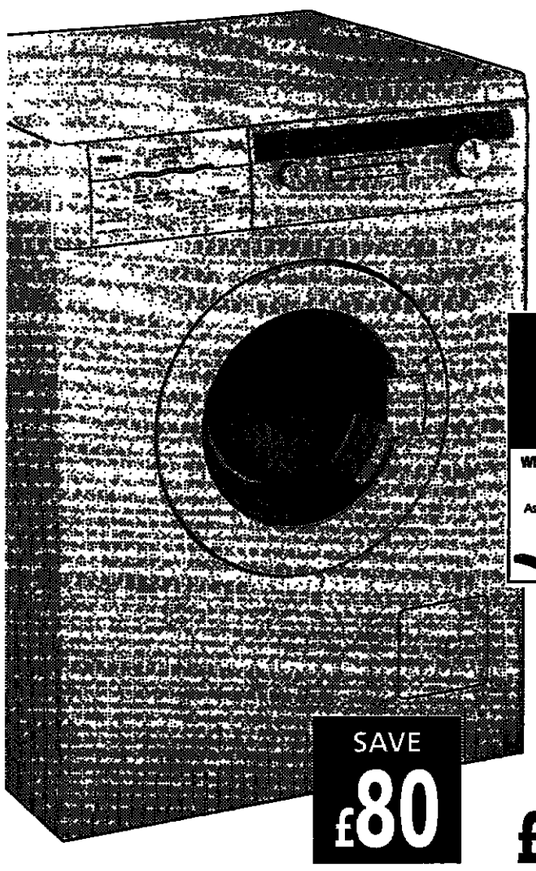
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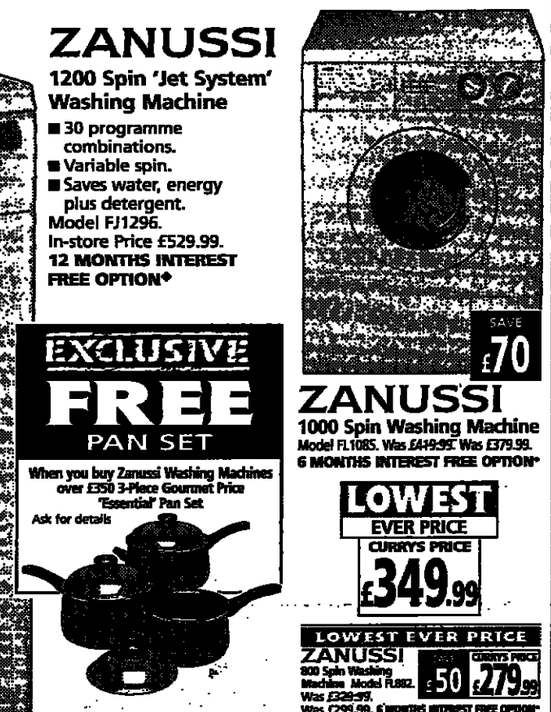


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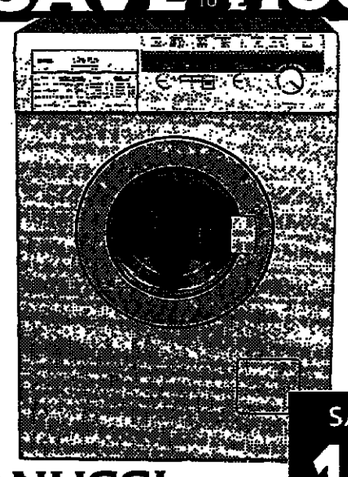
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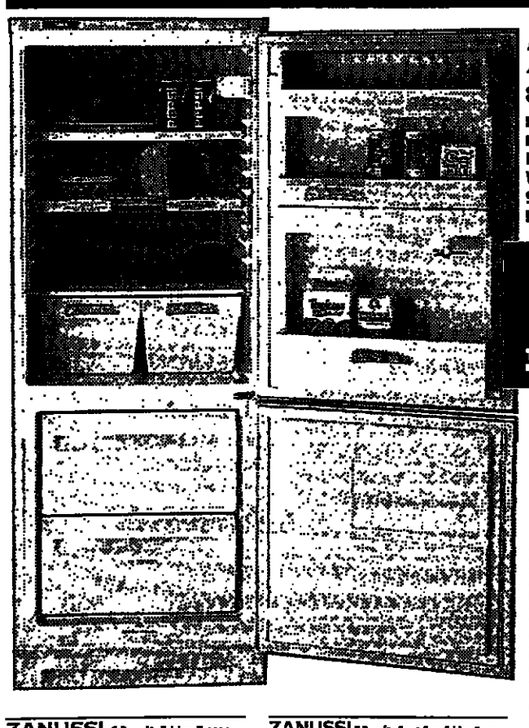
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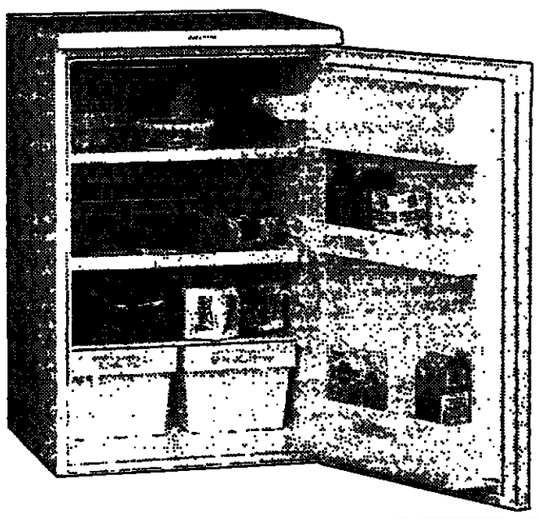
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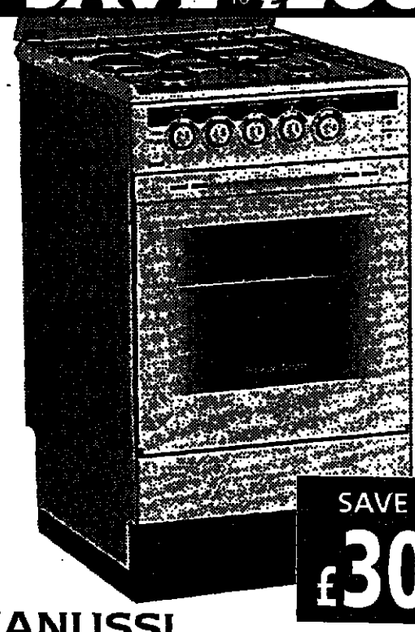
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Sculptor jailed for body parts theft

Kathryn Knight on the outcome of a trial that recalled the gruesome practice of graveyard plundering

A SCULPTOR made legal history yesterday by becoming the first person in Britain to be convicted of stealing parts of the human body.

Anthony-Noel Kelly, 42, was jailed for nine months by Judge Geoffrey Rivlin, who said his theft of limbs, heads and other remains from the Royal College of Surgeons was a revolting crime that affronted "every reasonable concept of decent behaviour".

Kelly's accomplice Niel Lindsay, 25, who helped to smuggle more than 40 body parts from the college at night in black binbags, was given a six-month suspended sentence after the judge ruled that he had been influenced by Kelly against his better judgment.

The pair are the first to be convicted of such theft because previous bodysnatchers have been charged with the much lesser common law offence of outraging public decency. Their legal teams said they will go to the Court of Appeal to try to reverse Judge Rivlin's ruling that human bodies, or parts of them, can be owned under certain circumstances and can therefore also be regared as stolen.



Lindsay: influenced against his judgment

During two days of complex legal argument, the prosecution put forward its theory that the common law had derived from an ancient misunderstanding. A 1614 ruling, in a case of alleged burial shroud theft, that a corpse could not own property had wrongly been taken to mean that a corpse itself could not be owned. Yesterday the judge ruled that a corpse, or parts of a corpse, could be owned if subjected to some form of skill, as in embalming or dissection.

In a court packed with the family of the two men, including Kelly's mother and father, Lady Mirabel and Bernard Kelly, the jury returned guilty verdicts after seven hours of deliberation.

The judge said that the pair had taken an "extraordinary" collection of up to 40 body parts, including three heads, three torsos, part of a brain, six arms, and 10 legs and feet.

Neither man had treated them with respect. "Far from it. Most of the body parts were buried in the grounds of a family home by simply putting them in a hole . . . no container was used," he said.

One leg, nicknamed "Hopalong" by Kelly in his diary, was stored in the attic. Other parts were hidden in the flat of a woman friend.

"The offence was revolting . . . a gross breach of trust by both of you. The offence was, if discovered, almost bound to do great harm to the Royal College of Surgeons and to the acts of bequest of human body parts to medical science," the judge said.

The jury had been told that the pieces were transported by taxi, motorcycle and even Underground train to Kelly's west London studio, where, by a process using rubber moulds, glass fibre and plaster, he created bronze and silver painted casts.

Kelly's scheme was uncovered when Her Majesty's Inspector of Anatomy saw a newspaper photograph of his first exhibition of a bronzed head and torso at the Islington art fair last year and contacted police.

Yesterday the judge emphasised that he was not sentencing in protest at this form of art. "I sentence you for a very serious theft, for very deliberate, criminal and disgraceful conduct."

He went on: "It is absolutely essential to know if any member of the public is contemplating donating his or her body for the purpose of science it will go to that purpose and no other."

Earlier the court had debated what was to become of the casts after Kelly's barrister, Terry Munyuard, made a last-minute plea for his client to keep them. However, after the judge said he was concerned that Kelly should not be seen to profit from his crime, Mr Munyard said that despite the "almost umbilical" link between his client and the moulds, he would be willing to hand them over.

The casts will be given to the Royal College of Surgeons, which can choose how to dispose of them. The stolen human remains will be cremated.

Later Mark Stephens, Kelly's solicitor, said in a statement that his client regretted causing any upset but did not believe he had done anything wrong. "He hopes he has not made it harder for any other artist to do vital work in the anatomy department."

Anthony Julius, page 22



Anthony-Noel Kelly: the judge told him his conduct was "criminal and disgraceful"

A life devoted to tracing the contours of death

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

WHEN Anthony-Noel Kelly's grandmother, Lady Kelly, died three years ago, he made a death mask and a cast of her hands within half an hour of her passing away.

It was a gesture that encapsulated the fascination with depictions of death that has governed most of Kelly's life and that ultimately led to a police raid on his cold Clapham flat in April last year.

There, detectives found bronzed plaster moulds of human torsos hanging in chains from his bedroom ceiling and other rooms crammed with moulds of human hands, feet and heads, and casts of animal remains.

Yet this extraordinary scene emerged against a family background rooted in British tradition. Kelly was born into one of Britain's leading Roman Catholic families, whose motto *Sola Virtus Invicta* (Virtue Alone Is Unconquerable) has served them for generations.

The second eldest of seven sons to Lady Mirabel Kelly, the youngest sister of the Duke of Norfolk, and Bernard Kelly, a merchant banker, Kelly enjoyed a happy childhood at the family seat near Ashford in Kent, a sprawling mansion known locally as Romden Castle. The eight Kelly offspring return frequently to the house at weekends. As a teenager, Kelly would spend hours in his turret room which overlooked the countryside on three sides, making drawings of plants and animals that he would hang on his bedroom wall. Later this room was to temporarily store black bin-bags of human remains brought to Kent for burial.

His art training was of the traditional variety at the Heatherley School of Fine Art in Chelsea. He undertook an apprenticeship as a restorer of paintings and for several years worked with private clients, restoring their paintings.

But during his twenties, the lure of human anatomy proved too powerful. To get closer to anatomical pieces, he trained as a butcher and spent hours in abattoirs and mortuaries studying animal and human form in death.

Kelly was introduced to the head of the Royal College of Surgeons, Richard Heald. Impressed by his dedication to the human form, Mr Heald allowed Kelly to attend his operations so that he could later make sketches of his technique and the reactions of the body to surgical techniques.

After asking for a letter of introduction to the anatomy department, Kelly was allowed to sketch the dissected remains stored in the college. Even this was not enough, and Kelly's diaries record the frustration of a man who wanted to handle the specimens himself.

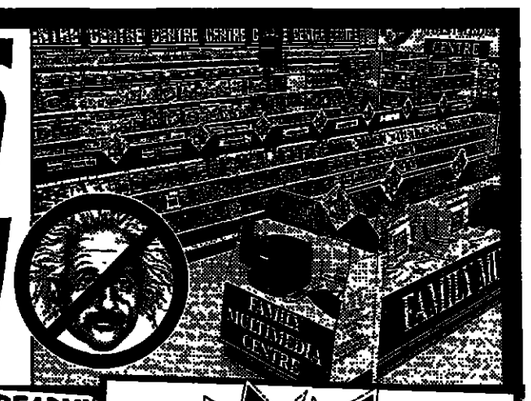
While those who have followed the trial may claim they sense a hint of perversion about Kelly, his friends talk of his naivety, his passion for his work, his warm-hearted and gentle nature and his generosity.

Edwina Orr, a director of the Richmond Holographic Studio, where Kelly attended life-drawing classes, said that he had a "passionate seriousness" about his art and was a man of "enormous integrity".

A friend of Kelly said that the sculptor felt that he was following a noble tradition. "He is inspired by artists like Bacon and Stubbs. What he wants more than anything is to be taken seriously. He does not wish to be sinister.

"He is really quite childlike in his beliefs. It is like dealing with someone from another world."

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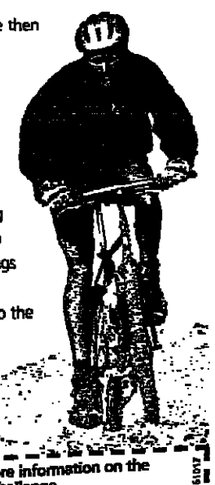
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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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"I suppose I have known for some time. The signs were there: the inappropriate pleasure at being sent cut flowers; the fact that I'd rather loiter outside Russell & Bromley than Dixons. I'm 44 and I can't go on denying my true nature..."

Find out tomorrow in Style why AA Gill thinks it is time to admit he is gay. Well, sort of...

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Child killer to be tagged on release

BY RICHARD FORD AND STEWART TENDLER

SIDNEY COOKE, a convicted child killer, has agreed to wear an electronic tag and be supervised by probation officers after his release from jail next week, Home Office sources said yesterday.

He could have been released unsupervised, but will now leave Wandsworth prison on Monday in an operation worked out by police, probation officers and the Home Office. He will be smuggled out of London to a secret address to prevent vigilantes hounding him from house to house. He will have to register his address with police within 14 days so it can be put on the Sex Offenders Register.

According to a source close to the case, Cooke agreed to the plan after being warned that if he did not co-operate police might tell local authorities he was living in the area because of the risk to children. Local newspapers might also have been told.

Cooke, 70, a former fairground worker, is ending a sentence for his part in the death of Jason Swift, 14, during a homosexual party. He has served nine years of a 16-year sentence for the rape and manslaughter of the runaway teenager. Robert Oliver, who was convicted with him, is staying in a hostel outside London under police guard after having to flee six towns.

Risk assessments of the paedophile ring have been carried out by the National Criminal Intelligence Service, the Prison Service and police. Cooke is still considered to be a predatory paedophile and a serious risk to young children. He has not attempted to understand his behaviour, remains "in denial" about his paedophile activities and has undergone no treatment.

As he was sentenced before 1992, he could be released unsupervised by either the police or Probation Service. The law has since been changed to allow extensive supervision of dangerous former prisoners.

Cooke already knows that he will need help because of the circumstances surrounding Oliver's release last year. He was forced to leave six towns until he ended up in Brighton. Eventually he asked for police protection and spent four months living in a Sussex police station while probation staff attempted to find a place to give him immediate sanctuary and a long-term home.

In February he was moved to a private clinic in Milton Keynes where it is costing £320 a day for him to be held as a voluntary patient under 24-hour police guard.

Yesterday Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said there was a small number of sex offenders who remained highly dangerous and there were currently no statutory powers for any agency to deal with them. Mr Fletcher said the decision to tag and supervise Cooke was unprecedented and he was worried about enforcing the controls.

Leading article, page 23



Jeremy Irons as Humbert Humbert and Dominique Swain as Lolita. The film has been banned in America

Lolita actor in anti-paedophile video

BY JAMES LANDALE
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE Foreign Office was last night ruing its choice of Jeremy Irons, the actor, to narrate a video launching the Asia Europe Meeting in London which urged world leaders to crack down on paedophilia and sex tourism.

Officials appeared to have forgotten that Irons is also the star of *Lolita*, the new film of Vladimir Nabokov's controversial novel. Irons plays a paedophile who seduces his 12-year-old stepdaughter. Despite protests, the film was last week passed by British censors and will be screened next month. It was banned in the United States after claims that it would encourage child sex abuse.

Foreign Office officials insisted Irons was simply an actor playing a part. In front of Tony Blair, 24 heads of government and the conference delegates, he read out a text which called for a global response to the sexual exploitation of children while the screen showed pictures of young girls kerb-crawling, middle-aged men stroking small boys' hair and sex scenes on the Internet.

Ann Widdecombe, the Tory MP, said: "This is typical of this Government. They are so hyped up about 'Cool Britannia' that they looked at the actor's name and not his credentials."

Leading article, page 23

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Priest held on charges of molesting children

BY RICHARD OWEN

A ROMAN Catholic priest in southern Italy has been arrested on charges of sexually molesting children over a 15-year period.

Father Giorgio Mazzoccato, 61, priest in charge at Castelluccio dei Sauri, a village of 2,500 people near Foggia, is charged with acts of paedophilia involving a dozen children aged between seven and 12 between 1981 and 1996.

He is accused of abusing children not only at his home but also "in the sacristy, in the confessional, and during church picnics and outings." He allegedly attracted young boys to his home by offering them games of billiards and table football.

Some of the offences are said to have taken place in Father Mazzoccato's previous parish at Arpinova, also near Foggia. Police said the allegations came to light during a separate investigation into paedophilia in Varese, near Lake Como, where Father Mazzoccato comes from and where members of his family still live.

Castelluccio dei Sauri is already in the headlines following the unexplained murder last month of schoolgirl Nadia Roccia, 19.

Captain is jailed for sex abuse of boys

THE former captain of the world's last ocean-going paddle steamer was jailed for three years yesterday for sexually abusing five teenage boys in his cabin. Captain David Neill, 53, was master of the *Waverley* for 23 years.

Neill, of Darvel, Strathclyde, was convicted last month at Glasgow Sheriff Court of abusing the five boys between 1981 and 1987.

The offences took place while the *Waverley* was on pleasure trips on the Clyde or berthed in Glasgow. Sentencing Neill at Glasgow Sheriff Court yesterday, Sheriff Daniel Convery told him: "As master of the *Waverley* you commanded respect amongst the many adolescent boys for whom the ship was a great attraction. With some of these boys, you exploited your considerable authority by sexually interfering with them, and you did so in a manner and on a scale which was systematic and cynical."

During the four-day trial, the victims told how they had felt privileged to have been invited up to the bridge to see the controls. Some were abused immediately.

In 1994, the *Waverley's* ex-chaplain, the Rev Clem Robb, 57, was jailed for seven years for abusing seven boys.

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Campaigners hail green belt homes victory

Court overturns official approval for development in Sussex, says Nick Nuttall

A RULING by the High Court in London, quashing government-endorsed plans for houses in the Sussex green belt, was yesterday hailed as an important victory in the battle to save the countryside from 4.4 million new homes.

Mr Justice Harrison ruled that John Prescott, the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, had failed to abide by his Government's own guidelines when approving new homes near Peacehaven, East Sussex.

The ruling came as Hertfordshire County Council voted to defer plans for the construction of 10,000 houses west of Stevenage and to ask Mr Prescott to support a new plan for 65,000 properties to be built in the county by 2011.

Mr Prescott had backed the council's original housing forecasts and strategy. But he subsequently announced a marked switch in policy in February, giving councils more freedom to set housing quotas rather than numbers being imposed by Whitehall.

Tony Burton, of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, said yesterday: "John Prescott now has a golden opportunity to bring to life his commitment to respecting local views over building plans so as to protect the countryside and regenerate the towns".

The plans to build the homes at Peacehaven caused widespread local protests because they were said to threaten the only undeveloped piece of land between Worthing and Newhaven.

Simon Festing, of Friends of the Earth, said that the ruling was "the first time that the Government has faced — and lost — a High Court challenge to a greenfield housing decision". Mr Justice Harrison said that Mr Prescott had erred in law when he gave the Valley Road scheme his blessing last November.

The judge said that the Secretary of State and a public planning inquiry inspector had failed properly to consider concerns expressed by Lewes District Council that the development would "seriously prejudice" the local authority's strategy of focusing local development away from the already over-crowded coastal strip.

An 18.61 hectare plot at Valley Road was earmarked for up to 113 bungalows and houses after planners identified "a shortfall" in the amount of land needed in the Lewes district for housing over the next five years. After an inquiry last July, the inspector reported back to Mr Prescott that the development would provide "a modest and welcome contribution" to housing in the district.

But Mr Justice Harrison said that neither the inspector nor Mr Prescott had taken account of the Government's own guidelines that planning permissions should not be granted where they would predetermine or prejudice local strategic planning considerations. The developers involved, Chaucer Estates Ltd and Peacehaven Valley Owners Ltd, will now have to consider, along with Mr Prescott, whether to appeal against the ruling.

☐ Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, stopped to talk to Friends of the Earth supporters last night when he arrived at Ashford, Kent, Kent for a G8 weekend summit of environment ministers which is being hosted by Mr Prescott. The group was protesting at the lack of action on climate change and a failure to create jobs. Mr Meacher told them that he would be pushing forward a tough programme.

Crewman lost as freak lull ends record attempt

BY EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

AN ATTEMPT to smash one of sailing's toughest records ended in disaster yesterday when the yacht capsized and a crewman was lost overboard.

The accident happened just 12 hours before the yacht *Fila* was due to finish its transatlantic crossing, cutting three days off the record.

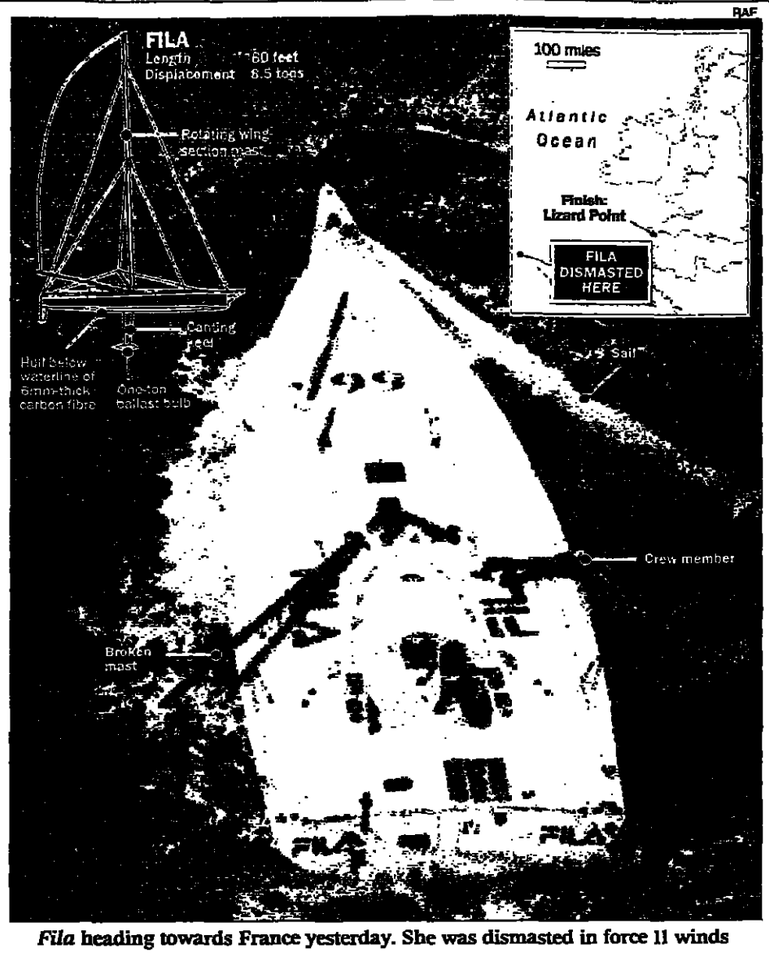
A young Italian sailor was lost when the 60ft yacht capsized and lost its mast about 350 miles southwest of Land's End. A second crewman was thrown into the stormy sea but managed to climb back on board. One man was taken to safety by a Royal Navy helicopter which braved "atrocious" conditions to reach him.

The three other crew members were slowly making for France last night. At the helm was Giovanni Soldini, a renowned racing yachtsman.

Signor Soldini, 29, had set a blistering pace after leaving New York last week. *Fila* was expected to reach the finish line, off Lizard Point, three days faster than the existing monohull record of 11 days 13 hours, set last year by the 80ft racing yacht *Nicorette*. The previous record had stood since 1905.

All was going well for Signor Soldini until the early hours of yesterday when *Fila* was running before force 11 winds, just short of a hurricane. The boat suddenly encountered an extreme drop in wind strength, cutting her speed from 25 to 30 knots to to about eight knots. The Royal Navy said that the boat was swamped by a big wave and was then knocked on her side before righting herself or was turned through 360 degrees.

The Royal Navy frigate *HMS Iron Duke* sailed 80 miles to assist the stricken yacht, which has a specially designed cambered deck to help her to right herself after capsize. An air-sea search for the missing crewman was under way, but hopes of finding him had faded.



Fila heading towards France yesterday. She was dismasted in force 11 winds

Two men critical after being swept overboard

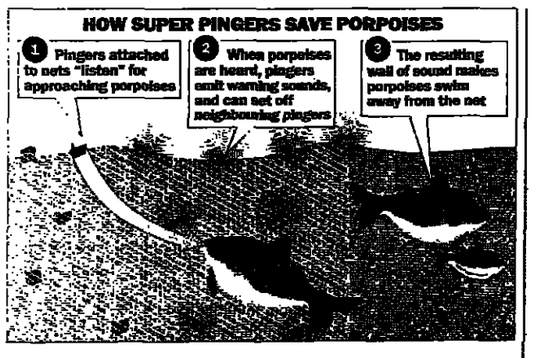
BY PAUL WILKINSON

TWO men were critically ill last night after being swept overboard from a racing yacht which set out despite warnings of treacherous conditions. They were among a party of ten on the 44-ft *Signature* when it was knocked over by a freak wave as it was almost in port. Three men were swept out to sea.

Coastguards confirmed that none had been wearing lifejackets. They were carried half a mile out before they were picked up by the Tynemouth lifeboat. One was flown by RAF helicopter to hospital in Newcastle upon Tyne, where he was described as poorly. The other two were landed at North Shields and taken to North Tyneside District General Hospital.

The yacht was understood to be taking the group, all men aged over 21, to the mouth of the Tyne and back from St Peter's Basin in Newcastle. Peter Kirkman, of the Tyne Tees coastguard, said: "They were warned not to go out by the harbour master at North Shields. Some of the waves were reaching 25ft at the mouth of the Tyne."

The yacht is to compete in the Around the World Alone race scheduled to begin from Southampton in June.



Pinger device aims to save porpoises

BY NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A DEVICE that bursts into a symphony of sounds when a porpoise or dolphin approaches fishing nets is to be put into into commercial production. The "super pinger", developed by British scientists, should cut dramatically the number of the creatures that become entangled and die in fishermen's nets.

A range of devices have been tried in recent years, including shiny discs that reflect back the animals' echo-locating clicks and simple pingers that emit click sounds every few seconds. Researchers at Loughborough University claim the super pinger, developed with funding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods, the EU and the Department of the Environment, is more effective.

The devices sit passively on a net until they detect the characteristic click of a porpoise or dolphin attracted by the fish. They then burst into action, firing back a range of programmed frequencies.

Professor Bryan Woodward of Loughborough's electronic and electrical engineering department, said yesterday: "The porpoise may set off just one of them but it then triggers all the others to go off in a domino effect. This gives the animal the impression it is facing an impassable barrier, which is the required effect."

The devices, which have been patented by Loughborough and licensed for commercial manufacture, are to have commercial sea trials this summer off the southwest coast. The trials will be conducted by the Sea Mammal Research Unit at the University of St Andrews.

Road-rage killer's friend is sent to jail

KEITH Collier, 50, a former sales manager, was jailed for a year at the Old Bailey yesterday for helping the "road-rage" double killer Jason Humble to try to cover up the death of a young couple.

Humble, 33, was jailed for 12 years at the Old Bailey on Thursday for the manslaughter of Toby Exley, 22, and his girlfriend Karen Martin, 20, last October. He had rammed Mr Exley's Fiesta with his Vauxhall Senator because it would not get out of his way at Hanworth, southwest London.

After the crash, Humble went straight to the bungalow he shared with Collier in Farnborough, Hampshire, and told him what had happened. The car was registered in Collier's name. Five days later, Collier reported the Senator stolen.

Sir Lawrence Verney, the Recorder of London, told Collier, who admitted perverting the course of justice: "You were prepared, out of a very misguided sense of loyalty to Humble, to pervert the course of justice."

Rodney Price, in mitigation, said that Collier felt sorry for Humble, who had no father and whose mother had committed suicide. "The defendant adopted the role of a father figure. He helped him over learning difficulties and to secure an apprenticeship."

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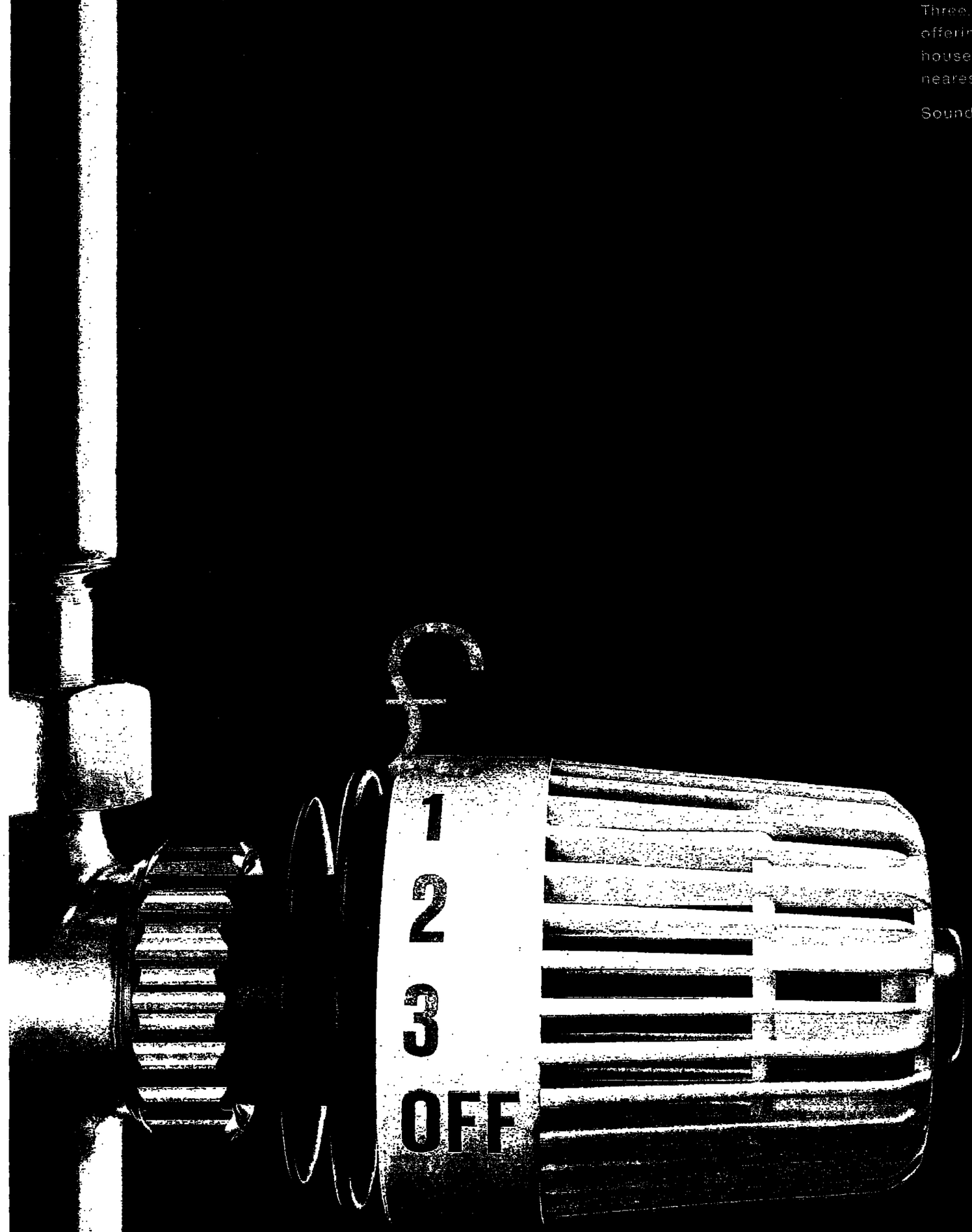
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How an accident of history led to Victoria's 'holiday snapshots'

BY ALAN HAMILTON

QUEEN VICTORIA *was at a* loose end. Prince Albert was confined to bed after crashing his four-in-hand into a rail wagon on a level crossing, so the Queen retired to her sitting room, set up her easel, and painted the view from her window.

Today the watercolour is back where it was executed in Coburg, Albert's birthplace in southern Germany, as part of an exhibition of 60 pictures from the Royal Collection — some by Victoria and some of her — acquired by the royal couple as mementoes of their visits to the dukedom of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, which for a period gave its name to the *British royal house*.

The Duke of York flies to Coburg today to open the exhibition in the old ducal palace, and to visit Rosenau Castle, birthplace of his great-great-great-grandfather Albert.

Victoria and Albert were inveterate tourists and avid collectors of souvenirs, often commissioning paintings to record their visits.

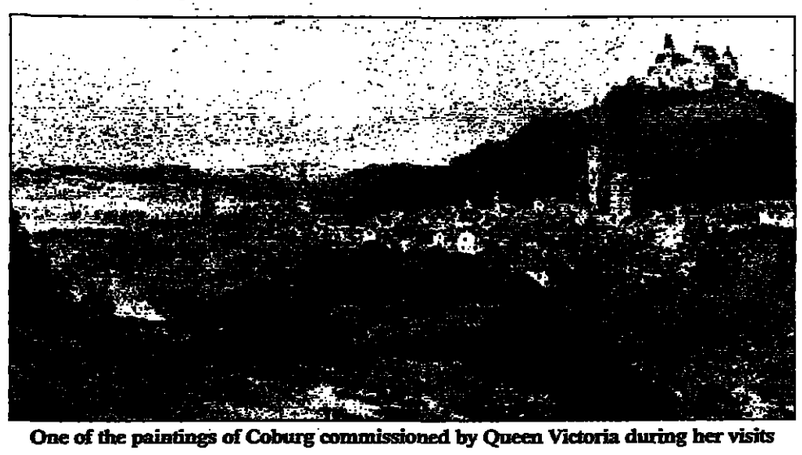
In an introduction to the exhibition catalogue, the Duke of Edinburgh writes: "Anyone who has grown up in the era of photography and videos will understand why people at the beginning of the 19th century were so keen to have a record of the sights they had seen on their journeys."

The paintings, never intended for public display but merely Victoria's equivalent of her holiday snapshot album, have been chosen from about 250 which Victoria and Albert collected on their travels in Germany. The Queen was a thrifty patron; she paid the artist William Callow £105 for his view of Coburg from the south west, painted 1863-64, and George Thomas £63, plus £80 travel expenses, to accompany her to Coburg to record her unveiling a statue to her late husband in 1865.

Victoria first visited Coburg in 1845 and the initial sight of her beloved Albert's birthplace was a profoundly emotional experience. She was touched that the crowd thought she looked *sehr Englisch*, and wrote in her diary: "If I were not who I am, this would have been my real home, but I shall always consider it my second one."

She painted the view of market day in Coburg from her window in the Ehrenburg Palace in 1869 when she went to see her grandson, Prince William of Prussia, later Kaiser Wilhelm, for the first time.

The visit was to prove Albert's last sight of his homeland. A year later he was dead from typhoid at the age of 42. But the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha lived on until the First World War, when Victoria's grandson, George V, thought it too inappropriately German — and changed it to Windsor.



One of the paintings of Coburg commissioned by Queen Victoria during her visits

THE ROYAL COLLECTION, HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II



Queen Victoria depicted unveiling a statue of Prince Albert in Coburg in 1865

Sainsburys to sell £6m Modigliani

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

A MASTERPIECE of modern art bought by Sir Robert and Lady Sainsbury more than 60 years ago to celebrate their wedding is to be sold to set up Britain's first research centre for Japanese art.

Modigliani's *Portrait of Baranowski* is expected to fetch up to £6 million for the centre at the University of East Anglia, where it has been hanging in the Sainsbury Centre, when it is auctioned by Sotheby's on June 30.

Dame Elizabeth Esteve-Coll, the former Vice-Chancellor of UEA who acts as adviser to the Sainsbury Centre, said the couple had decided to sell the painting because of their enduring fascination with Japanese art and culture. "It was the first painting Sir Robert and Lady Sainsbury bought together, in the week they were married. You could call it a wedding present to themselves, so their decision to sell shows the value they place on the new project."

The portrait, among the most valuable pieces in the Sainsbury collection, will be exhibited in Zurich, New York and Tokyo, as well as London, before the sale.

The Sainsbury Centre opened in 1973 and houses an extensive collection ranging from tribal art to a number of paintings by Francis Bacon. *Portrait of Baranowski*, the study of a Polish emigré, was painted in Paris in 1918 when Modigliani was at the height of his brief and hedonistic working life.

Neither Sir Robert nor Lady Sainsbury has visited Japan. Dame Elizabth said Sir Robert, 91, was too frail to attend the Tokyo exhibition, but the university would be represented. Vincent Watts, the vice-chancellor, expressing his gratitude to them, said the project was "an enormously exciting" extension to the existing Sainsbury benefaction.



The Modigliani to be auctioned on June 30

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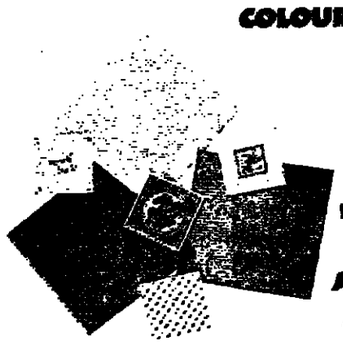


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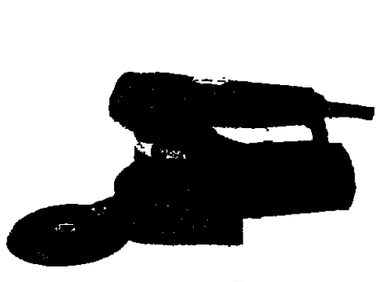
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DES JENSON

The sculptor Bill Woodrow makes the most of his own work, *Sitting on History*, a new bronze bench gracing the entrance hall of the British Library at St Pancras, London

Impotence pill could be on offer this year

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE first pill to treat impotence, which was granted a licence in America last week, could be available in Britain by September.

Ann Craig, the director of the Impotence Association, expects the demand to be overwhelming. "Six out of ten men with impotence won't even go to their GPs," she said. "But when they know there is a tablet to cure it, there will be a huge rush. People are desperate — they will do anything."

Estimates of the number of men who suffer impotence are unreliable, as so many never consult a doctor. But it is believed to affect one in ten, mostly in older age groups. In America, estimates vary between 18 and 30 million men.

The drug that could help them, Viagra, was developed by Pfizer and will sell in America for about £4 a pill. Taken an hour before intercourse, it improves penile rigidity in the majority of men. Contrary to some reports, it is not an aphrodisiac: it does not increase the sexual urge, but makes it more possible to satisfy it.

Merrill Lynch expects sales of Viagra to reach as much as $1 billion a year by 2000. According to another Wall Street analyst, David Saks, the figure could be $4.5 billion by 2004.

Whether Viagra will be prescribed on the NHS remains to be seen. American health insurers are already wrestling with this question. One California insurer has agreed to pay half the cost. It considered paying the full amount while limiting the number of prescriptions, but nobody could agree how much drug-assisted sex was reasonable.

Some American physicians fear that the drug may be abused. The FDA recommends one dose per day but some participants in trials are said to have taken it up to three times a day. "There is a high potential for what we would call inappropriate use of this pill," Dr Alan Jacobs of Health Net, a health insurer, told the *San Francisco Examiner* newspaper.

The NHS has yet to tackle the problem and still has no policy over its latest treatment, a suppository named Muse, according to Ms Craig. "Fundholding GPs and health authorities are holding meetings to decide what to do, but nobody has come up with a policy yet. A lot of doctors are saying to people that they can't get Muse, but what they mean is that they as fundholders aren't going to pay for it."

Patients who are receiving it pay for it themselves, with a *private prescription from their* GPs. She expects at least double the demand for Viagra, if and when it is licensed, and said there were good reasons for making it available on NHS prescription. Pfizer is more cautious about demand, pointing out that only a minority of impotence sufferers seek treatment. On the evidence of the reaction to Muse, which was introduced in February, Ms Craig expects that to change. "We have had 5,000 calls in the two months since Muse was launched," she said. "A lot of people are very happy with it, we've had great feedback." At about £15 per treatment, Muse is not cheap. Viagra seems likely to be both more affordable and more acceptable.

> "Everyone has been looking for a drug with no side effects"

Myron Murdock, the national medical director for the Impotence Institute of America, said: "This is what everybody has been looking for, an oral pill with basically no side-effects that is effective in a significant number of patients."

A study by Clive Gingell and colleagues, of Southmead Hospital in Bristol, found that ten out of 12 patients who were given sildenafil — the chemical name for Viagra — benefitted. This compared with only two out of 12 given dummy pills. Side effects included headache and dyspepsia but were "mild and transient", the team reported.

"Viagra really is a very significant drug," Mr Gingell has said. "On our trials it has worked far better than we could ever have hoped for. It is a frontline treatment for impotence — what men will want to try first of all."

Pfizer submitted Viagra for clearance to the European Medicines Evaluation Agency on September 29 last year. A decision is expected later this year, probably in the autumn.



Birds and the bees? You've lost me there, son

BY DAVID CHARTER
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

FATHERS must talk more about sex and relationships with their sons to help to reverse boys' worsening behaviour problems and cut teenage pregnancies, the Sex Education Forum said yesterday.

The three-fold increase in pupils expelled from school in the past three years partly reflects teachers' and parents' failure to tackle boys' emotional problems, the forum said. A rethink of sex education at school and home was also needed because England had the highest level of underage pregnancies in Europe. Gill Lenderyou, senior development officer at the forum, said: "Boys told our researchers that they would like their fathers to talk to them more. There is a real sense of isolation and loneliness."

The Sex Education Forum comprises 44 groups, including parent groups, religious bodies, childcare and educational organisations. Launching the forum's guide, *Let's Hear it for the Boys*, yesterday, researchers said that a typical father/son conversation they had recorded showed how they colluded to avoid talking about sex.

Father: "I hope you're not doing anything stupid because of this Aids thing."

Son: "I've heard about that on the telly."

Father: "Good."

Unlike other Europeans, British men and boys were frightened to show their ignorance of sexual matters, Mrs Lenderyou said. The father could have said: "I have been thinking about the issue of Aids and wondered what you know about it? Do you think we need to know more about it?"

Parents were much more likely to talk to their daughters about sex because they feared pregnancy. Boys were too often left to get their information from friends or pornography, she said.

Prince to be patron of Goon fans

THE Prince of Wales is to be patron of the Goon Show Preservation Society for five years, it was announced yesterday.

The Prince is among the Goons' biggest fans. Maxine Ventham, the society's secretary, said: "We are over the moon. He gets asked about so many patronages that we never thought we had a chance." They were particularly delighted because the news came just before Spike Milligan's 80th birthday. "Prince Charles can do the characters' voices brilliantly, which is quite funny when you think that he's the heir to the Throne."

The Prince once wrote an introduction to a book of *Goon Show* scripts, and in September sent a message to mark the 25th anniversary of the last show. Milligan and Harry Secombe attended his wedding.

The BBC radio shows — first broadcast in 1951 with the late Peter Sellers and Michael Bentine completing the team — were a national institution.

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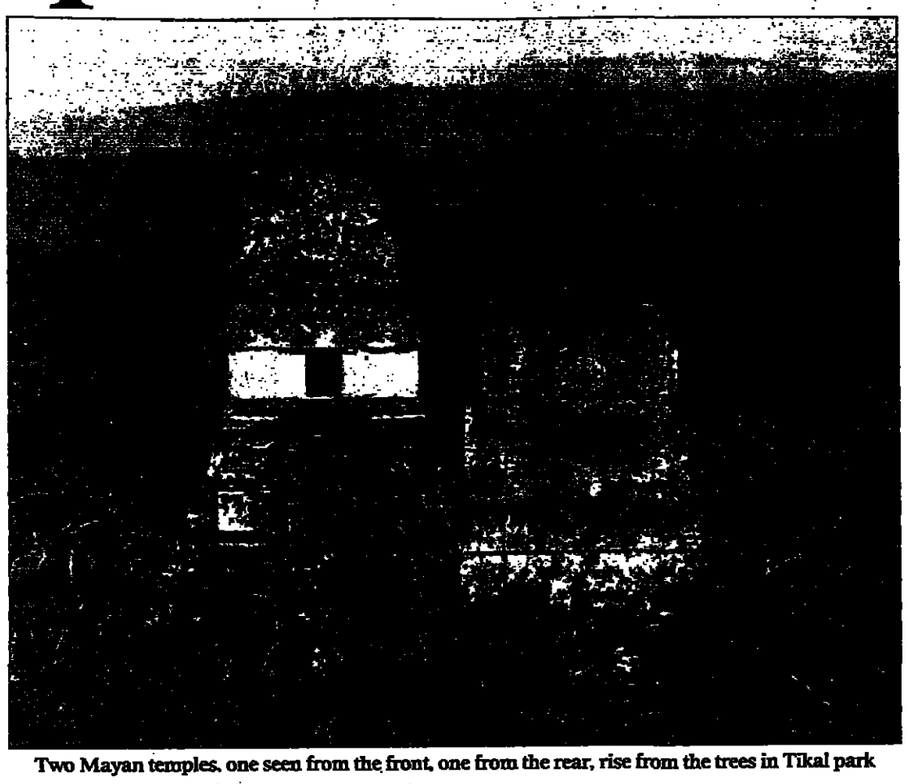
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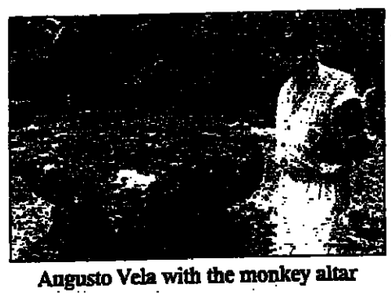
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Temples of doom

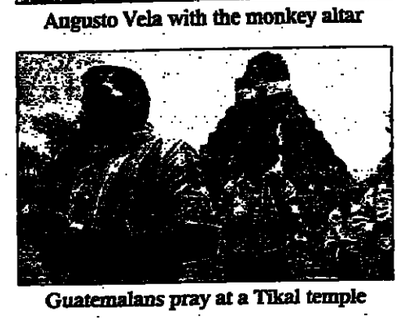
Looters force Guatemalans to move priceless art treasures from Mayan religious sites



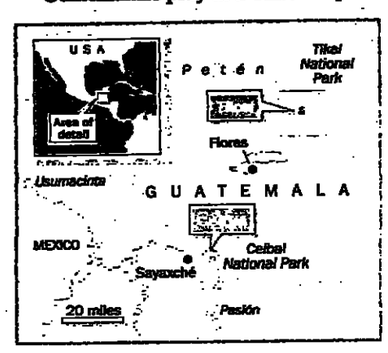
Two Mayan temples, one seen from the front, one from the rear, rise from the trees in Tikal park



Augusto Vela with the monkey altar



Guatemalans pray at a Tikal temple



KIMBERLEY WHITE



Augusto Vela, Culture Minister, with a stele at Ceibal

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN CEIBAL, GUATEMALA

IN AN attempt to safeguard its dwindling pool of Mayan artefacts from looters and art thieves whose plunder has denuded nearly 90 per cent of the country's archaeological sites, the Government of Guatemala plans to "evacuate" hundreds of ancient stelae, or stone tablets, and replace them with modern replicas.

The project will focus mainly on Petén, the vast, sparsely populated province bordered by Mexico and Belize, and the part of modern Guatemala where the Mayans had their heartland. Work is to begin shortly in Ceibal, a ruined city built in about 800, now hidden in the folds of a dense jungle off the Pasión River, near the town of Sayaxché.

"Our task is monumental," said Augusto Vela Mena, the Culture Minister. "We are a very poor country and simply cannot afford to post guards round the clock at all the sites we have." He said there are about 2,200 Mayan sites in Petén and fewer than one in twenty is guarded.

As a result, looters have been able to rob these sites at will. Although their export from Guatemala is illegal, thousands of artefacts — ranging from pieces of pottery to large stone statues — are smuggled out every year, finding their way into the hands of collectors in Europe.

"Slowly, unstoppably, our history is being taken from us," Señor Vela lamented. "These looters are bleeding Guatemala of her heritage, her memory, her identity."

As he spoke, he leant over a large stone object called the Altar of the Monkey, a carved disc that was once held up by three pillars in simian shape. Made in about 750, only two pillars are left, and they are completely eroded. "Last November, 12 armed looters came and stole a pillar, the only one that was in good condition. They came, they hacked it off and they left."

The men were seen escaping by a local fisherman, who was too scared to intervene. The looters have a fearsome reputation, and are often in league with drug smugglers who operate from clandestine airstrips in the jungle. These same strips are used, in many cases, to fly out Mayan artefacts. Last September a gang killed an unarmed guard at Yaxhá — another site — who stumbled upon them breaking into a tomb. They stole four pieces of pottery, each more than 1,000 years old, and smashed two more.

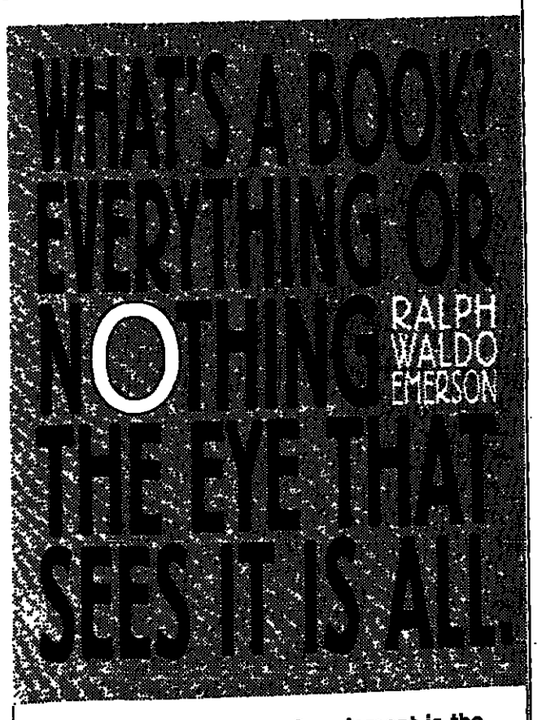
With the help of a grant from Philip Morris, the tobacco giant, the Culture Ministry will begin to cart stone carvings away and replace them with modern copies. The grant of $160,000 (£98,000) — to be followed next year by another — was made last week in Guatemala City. The annual budget for the body which administers Tikal, the Mayan jewel, is $15,000.

Mayan scholars have given the project whole-hearted support. Federico Fahsen, one of the leading experts in ancient Mayan script, said: "Some purists may quibble about taking the originals out of their context, but I have no time for them. For us, it is a question of cultural life or death. Either we take these artefacts out now, or we lose them forever."

Martin Sullivan, the chairman of President Clinton's advisory committee on cultural property, said: "No one should preach to the Guatemalans. They are handling everything by the book."

"The project has an added urgency because looters are not the only source of danger. Señor Fahsen said: "An increasing threat comes from landless peasants who are moving into Petén in search of space to plant maize. They slash their way through the jungle. Often, they destroy important archaeological sites, whether deliberately to remove an 'inconvenience', or out of ignorance."

Leading article, page 23



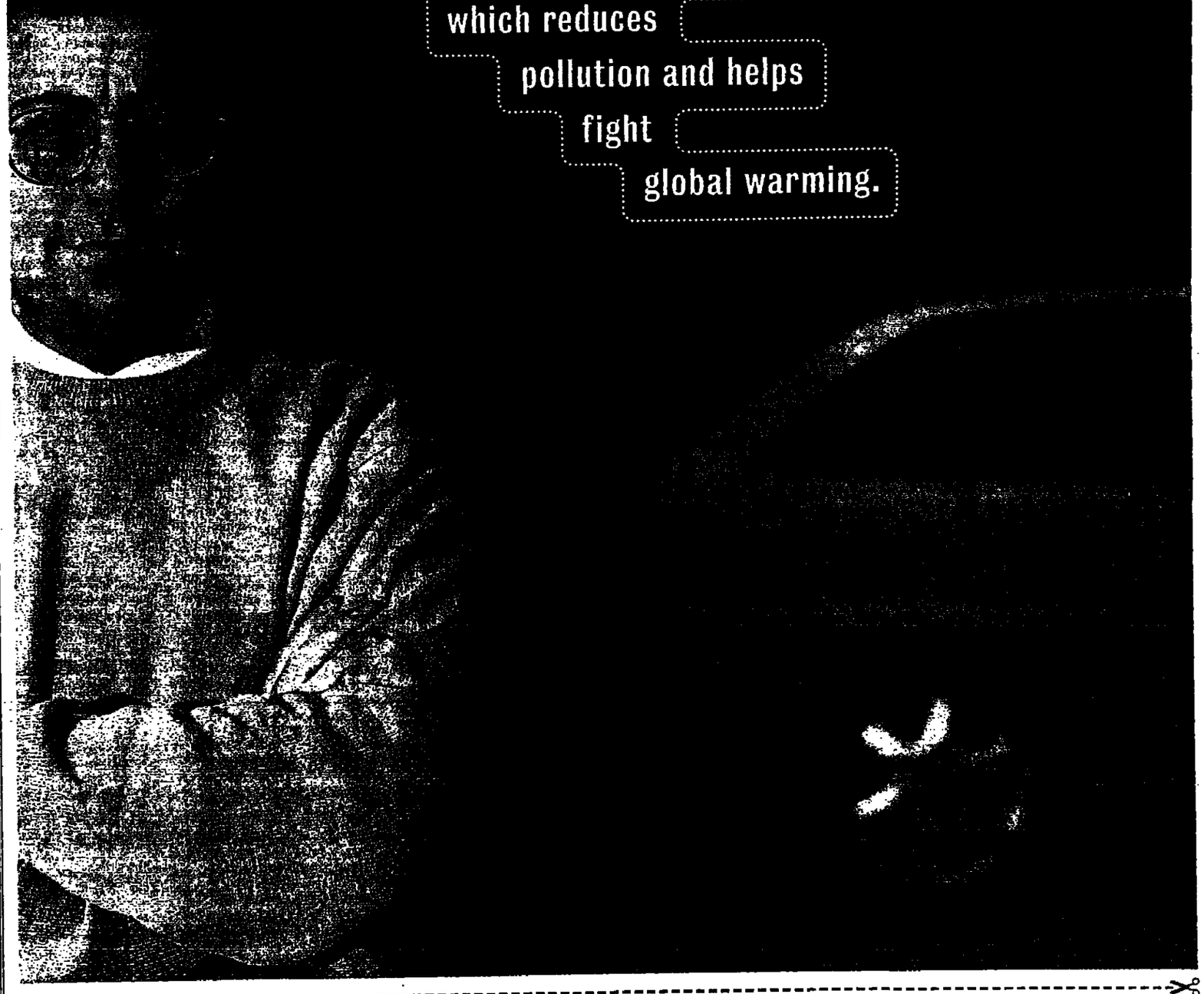
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School smacking exile ventures out of Africa

Industrial tribunal to rule on 'witch hunt', writes **David Charter**



Mrs Davies near her home

A TEACHER whose life "fell apart" after she allowed a five-year-old boy to smack his classmates with a ruler is returning from her African hideaway to make a stand against political correctness.

Brenda Davies claims she was hounded from Tennyson Road Primary School in Luton last year for her controversial method of dealing with children who had bullied the boy. The 50-year-old teacher found herself at the centre of a national debate over classroom discipline when she rejected parents' demands for an apology. Although praised in newspaper editorials, she was shunned in the staffroom.

Depressed by her colleagues' reaction, Mrs Davies fled to Malindi on the coast of Kenya. In the year since she arrived, she has built a career as headmistress of a tiny school where, she says, standards of learning and behaviour are far higher than those she left behind.

Sitting on the verandah of her new home, overlooking the white sand and palm trees of Malindi Bay, she said that she would gladly never return to England. However, she is coming back today to claim at an industrial tribunal that she was forced to resign from her job in England after a witch hunt.

"I hate going back to Luton," she said. "It's such a relief to get back to Malindi. But I feel strongly that the kids saw a person who protected them punished and they saw the bullies get away with it. I think it has made teachers afraid to stand up against bullying."

She said that the bullies, six boys aged five and six, kicked their victim "like a football" in the playground. She gave him the choice of forgiving them or smacking them on the hand with a wooden ruler. "I still think I did the right thing. Five-year-olds are capable of being little monsters, so if you don't nip things in the bud you end up with something worse."

She then became convinced that the school wanted rid of her. She was given a final written warning and, feeling under intense pressure, she resigned in February last year. "I was pretty close to a nervous breakdown. Everyone at school seemed embarrassed to be seen with me. Day by day I was getting pretty depressed. One night I looked at the clock and wondered if there was time to bleed to death in a warm bath before my husband came home."

Mrs Davies spent five years in Kenya in the late 1970s with her husband, Peter, a civil servant. The advertisement for the post at Malindi seemed like divine intervention and the salary — £250 a term — an irrelevance.

Her first duty every morning at Sandpiper Prep is to spray the classrooms to kill mosquitoes. She spends 30 minutes every morning on the three Rs and her approach is popular with the Kenyan parents. Debbie Paul, mother of Charlotte, aged six, said: "Without her enthusiasm and her motivation we would be lost. She is absolutely brilliant. We are very lucky to have Brenda."

The one drawback is the separation from her husband and two sons. "He realised I had to get away from it all. He knew the real state I was in," she said. "I go to Stevenage at the end of term, he comes out to Kenya at half term, so we are actually separated for six weeks at a time.

"It is the only downside at the moment. I love living in Malindi, it is a little haven and a cure for my own psychological damage. I am recovering. And the kids here are ahead of those back home. This job has been the most wonderful experience. At the end of the first chapter of *Out of Africa*, Karen Blixen says, 'Here I am where I ought to be'. I just echo her feelings."

DAVID CHARTER

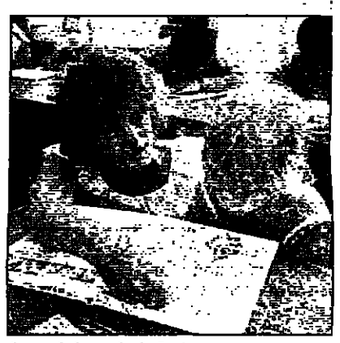


Sandpiper school has given its headmistress a "wonderful experience"




Teacher in smacking row resigns, blaming stress

Times report of the resignation



Mrs Davies says her pupils are better behaved than their Luton counterparts

Sixth-form students urged to take five

BY JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

TEENAGERS will be encouraged to study five subjects in the sixth form, rather than the usual three, after changes to A levels announced yesterday by Baroness Blackstone, the Education Minister.

The new framework for qualifications for 16-19 year olds was delayed for several months after apparent differences of opinion between ministers. Lady Blackstone had championed a system more like the French *baccalauréat*, linking academic and vocational courses.

In a victory for traditionalists, however, A levels are to remain largely unchanged. The main innovation, to be introduced in 2000, will be a one-year AS level, taken as the first year of an A-level course, with a parallel arrangement for General National Vocational Qualifications. New qualifications testing the "key skills" of communication, numeracy and the use of information technology will be piloted from September.

Lady Blackstone said students should able to take more than three subjects in their first year in the sixth form. English teenagers were taught for 15-18 hours a week on average, compared with 30 a week in France and Germany.

However, head teachers said the plans were too timid. John Dunford, general secretary elect of the Secondary Heads Association, said there was no room on timetables for the extra subjects and no funding for the extra staffing.

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A bestselling writing duo is providing weekends of advice for single women on the lookout for love

Lonely hearts learn to live by the 'Rules'

JAMES BONE'S NEW YORK



IT WAS once famously observed that a woman over 30 has less chance of finding a husband in New York than getting killed in a terrorist attack. An estimated 1.8 million single women live in the city, compared to just 1.3 million single men. Despite the awesome gender gap, the gutsy women of this town are determined to buck the odds. To hear Ellen Fein and Sherry Schneider tell it, all they have to do is follow "The Rules".

Mrs Fein and Mrs Schneider, who co-wrote the bestselling primer of 35 rules for successful dating, have just launched their first "Rules Weekend" to help New York gals snag Mr Right. Fifty lonely hearts paid $249 each to hear the two and other experts lecture in Manhattan.

Mrs Schneider and Mrs Fein became celebrated in Britain two years ago when Will Carling's estranged wife gave Diana, Princess of Wales, a copy of their dating manual for her birthday (Rule 23: Don't Date a Married Man). They are now available for telephone consultations with the lovelorn for $250 an hour. (One British fan recently wrote asking when she should tell her date that she had undergone a sex-change operation. "We can't help her," was their reply.) The two have penned a sequel covering such tricky scenarios as affairs at work and going out with celebrities, and recently offered guidelines for women who get involved with the US President. (Don't go to the Oval Office until he has been to your apartment at least three times; don't introduce him to your college roommate until you have met the Vice-President.) But the Rules Weekend is an innovation, giving women advice on everything from money and muscles to makeup and making out.

"When we were in England, women were saying, 'We are not aggressive Americans. We do not chase men'. But they move in with them for five years and the men never propose," Mrs Schneider says.

"British women are too available. They should not go on holiday with men before they are married, they should not live with men, they should get off the phone after ten minutes. They still need the Rules like we do."

□ *A woman talking to her boyfriend, overheard on leaving the hit musical Rent: "I know you didn't like it. You don't like anything. But did you not like it more or less than you usually don't like things?"*

JUSTIN SUTCLIFFE



Sherry Schneider, left, and Ellen Fein talk about their book on successful dating at a New York seminar



DiCaprio: local

Leo the lionised

BACK from his fleeting appearance in Leicester Square, Leonardo DiCaprio has decided to settle down in my neighbourhood where he's creating more havoc than has been seen since the sinking of the *Titanic*. The Hollywood heart-throb has been staying at the fancy new Mercer Hotel in SoHo even before it opens, and partying almost nightly at the hot local *boite*, Moomba. A friend who owns a restaurant where Leo dined has been besieged by reporters wanting to know what the boyish star eats. The scoop: grilled chicken and the vegetable plate.

A lad, Tim Hays, who works at a coffee shop in Virginia shopping centre looks so much like DiCaprio that he has been dubbed Leonardo DiCappuccino.

□ A street-smart doctor has come up with a musical way of making teenagers take their asthma medicine — a rap song. "Twice a day, stops the wheeze and helps you breathe," the lyrics advise. Dr John Clarke also stars in the video, puffing on an inhaler, and has no trouble getting dates.



The actors Elizabeth Hurley and Hugh Grant in New York for fashion week. British designers were such a success that Saks Fifth Avenue, one of the city's leading department stores, is planning a big bash in September called "British Invasion II". Following the 1960s invasion of The Beatles, Carnaby Street, Vidal Sassoon and Mary Quant, this time around it is John Galliano, Vivienne Westwood, Alexander McQueen and the rest.

Diplomatic rescue act

ROLLS-ROYCE may be coming under foreign ownership, but some things remain the same. Returning to the city after depositing Britain's UN Ambassador at the airport, Gary McBride, his driver, spotted a damsel in distress on the Triborough Bridge, struggling to change a flat tyre. When the diplomatic Roller pulled up, she squawked: "Oh my Gawd, that's the last car I expected would stop." After Mr McBride changed the wheel, she offered him a case of wine but the chivalrous chauffeur declined.



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Widow of Bono sets sights on Congress

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA

THE candidate is a former waitress with no political experience who admits she is not "an expert on anything". Yet she is the new darling of the Republican party, and odds-on favourite to win a seat in the House of Representatives next week. Her secret: She is Sonny Bono's widow.

With heartfelt endorsements from Arnold Schwarzenegger, the actor, and Dan Quayle, former Vice-President, Mary Bono, 36, has rushed from "stay-at-home mom" to potential politician in the three months since her husband died in a skiing accident near Lake Tahoe.

The idea of running as his successor began "as a low murmur at home during the week after the accident", Mrs Bono told *The Times* this week after addressing a friendly meeting of environmentalists in Palm Desert, a place of endless low-rise shopping malls and summer temperatures that can fry an egg on a car roof. "At first it went in one ear and out the other, but then it snowballed until everyone was talking about it."

Like her husband, Mrs Bono is a Republican. Among those urging her to run was the singer and actress known as Cher — Bono's first wife and a pillar of Hollywood's Democratic establishment.

"She backed me as a woman, as someone who knows me and as my friend," said Mrs Bono, who has been close to Cher since her husband's star-studded funeral in January. Dressed in designer black suits and Ferragamo heels, she has been campaigning throughout the vast 44th congressional district, from the manicured golf courses of Rancho Mirage to impoverished Indian settlements near the Arizona border.

At times she has appeared lonely, overwrought and under-rehearsed. She has lost 10lb in weight and courted disaster with a blunt style that once found her advocating means-tested healthcare to an audience of pensioners.

But she has impressed Republican leaders as well as local voters with her dedication, and she is heir to an auspicious trend: as Bono's widow, she is six times more likely to win her seat than a female candidate whose spouse has not preceded her to Washington and died. Between 1916 and 1993, 84 per cent of female congressional candidates following dead husbands to the Capitol won their seats.

Naivety is apparently as alarming for the candidate as for voters. "It's kind of scary to stand up and talk about Iraq," she said recently. "But there's no one thing that you can do that qualifies you to be a member of Congress, and thank God that's the way it was set up."

A surgeon's daughter who met Bono at her graduation celebration in Los Angeles, Mary became his fourth wife 12 years ago. Until his death, she lived with him and their daughters in a $1.45 million (£900,000) estate in Palm Springs.

Her politics have so far proved a natural fit for the conservative 44th district. She owns a gun, objects to bloated government and opposes abortions, while backing a woman's right to have one in extremis.

Mrs Bono admits campaigning serves two purposes. "It helps me both grieve and get over it," she says. "The most healing part is knowing Sonny would be proud of me. But he would also make campaigning much more fun."

JOHN HAYES / AP



Mary Bono, with her children Chianna, 6, centre, and Chesare, 9, appears in a TV interview while campaigning for her late husband's seat



Bono: left a place for wife on Capitol Hill

Hoteliers find cash solace in Paula sex trial loss

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

LITTLE ROCK, together with its most famous son, is a winner from the collapse of the Paula Jones trial. Hotels stand to rake in hundreds of thousands of dollars in non-refundable bookings for May and June, but the Arkansas capital will be spared the deluge of journalists and the national spotlight it was dreading.

The grand old hotels in the centre of town have enjoyed record revenues since President Clinton's election in 1992 and the steady stream of scandals that sent newshounds repeatedly back to Little Rock. The Jones trial, which had been due to start on May 27, would have provided a glittering finale.

But many hotels still stand to make a killing from deposits already cashed at prices double the normal room rates. ABC News has lost $50,000 (£31,000) in advance fees for rooms at three hotels, while CNN has written off "tens of thousands".

The Legacy and the Capital hotels had both sold out despite demanding advance payments of $4,000-$5,000 for rooms for the trial's expected six-week run. The Legacy was also asking $15,000 for a room giving a direct view of the courthouse and was charging $6,700 for 18 parking spaces which could offer television trucks clear satellite transmission. However, the Excelsior, the site of the alleged sexual incident between Mr Clinton and Mrs Jones, had vowed not to raise its rates.

The sums spent are a fraction of what the nation's media crews would have poured into the town's economy if the trial had gone ahead.

Hotels believe that the loss of the case will have cost them $500,000, and shops and taxi firms may have lost the same amount. ABC News estimates it would have spent nearly $1 million covering the trial.

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Japan under pressure to rescue Asian economies

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

JAPAN yesterday came under sustained diplomatic pressure from Europe and its Asian neighbours to reflate its stagnant economy as leaders from both continents gathered in London to try to staunch Asia's financial crisis.

But the Japanese Prime Minister defiantly insisted that Asia was on the mend, and promised the 25 Asian and European countries that he would do whatever was needed to put his nation's economy in order. At the opening of the second Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem) in London, Ryutaro Hashimoto insisted that the Asian economies were fundamentally sound and their difficulties would soon be overcome when growth restarted. "The worst has come and gone," he said.

Japan has come under enormous pressure, at home and abroad, to reflate its economy and stimulate domestic consumer demand. Mr Hashimoto gave no details of the measures he promised to take nor reacted to reports that the Japanese economy was on the brink of collapse. But his message was a defiant signal that Europe should not write off Asia's resilience.

As long as Asia kept its intellectual and human resources, "the current trials which it is facing will serve as a launch pad to carry it forward to the next stage", Mr Hashimoto said.

Tony Blair was less optimistic. He told the assembled presidents and prime ministers that the Asian financial crisis was not over. But he said Europe could not afford to turn its back on the turmoil.

"We in Europe have a real opportunity to show that we meant what we said about partnership, that we are not fair-weather friends who turn away at the first sign of difficulty, but partners for the long term, ready to stick by Asia through thick and thin," he said.

He gave a warning that the two continents faced four main challenges: to limit the impact of the crisis on the global economy; to limit the social impact; to maintain open markets and further trade liberalisation; and to strengthen the international monetary system to prevent this crisis from recurring.

In a message clearly aimed at some Asian governments, Mr Blair called for greater transparency, more discipline in financial systems and a commitment to boost trade and open markets. "Europe will benefit from an open Asia. Asia will benefit from an open Europe," he said.

In Washington yesterday, President Clinton, who said that Japan was the "key to stability and growth in Asia", urged Tokyo to take bold action to address its economic problems.

Downgrading Japan, page 28



Romano Prodi, the Italian Prime Minister, with Ryutaro Hashimoto, his Japanese counterpart, in London yesterday

LARRY CHAN / REUTERS



A dancer performs at the launch of the Silver Seraph, only the ninth Rolls-Royce model in 90 years, in Hong Kong on Thursday

New Rolls fails to rev up sales

Even Hong Kong's fabled millionaires are reeling from the economic storms hitting East Asia, **James Pringle** writes

IT WAS perhaps not the best of times to launch a new Rolls-Royce model. The recently British, perhaps to be German, company unveiled the Silver Seraph, its first new version for 18 years this week, at a time when even Hong Kong's fabled millionaires are reeling from the effects of East Asia's sharp economic downturn.

Last year distributors MD Motors sold 66 Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars in the former British colony, but in the first quarter of this year only 12 of the limousines have been ordered. General manager Holger Gossmann said this week: "The brakes were really pulled late last year. That's when inquiries broke down."

Last night two members of Hong Kong's *jeunesse dorée* sat in the back seat of a Seraph contemplating its huge pricetag. "This is something really special," a salesman said hopefully. "Downturn or not, who can resist?"

Not so long ago Hong Kong was a place where the only direction people knew was up, from the stock market to flat rents, but there has been a slump in property prices, and the stock market is well below par; it sank further yesterday on the gloomy economic news from Japan.

Overall, car sales have fallen 35 per cent in value compared to a year ago. Sales of jewellery and watches have slumped 21 per cent, and even consumer durables have fallen 8 per cent.

Even Hong Kong's bejewelled *tai-tais*, the posh society ladies from the mansions on the Peak, are said now to unobtrusively check the pricetags as they stroll through Versace, Gucci and Hermes boutiques at Pacific Place and other top shopping malls.

It was last October, just three months after the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China, that the stock market plunged and interest rates rose sharply to protect the Hong Kong dollar. Now unemployment is at its highest level in seven years. A bout of chicken flu has not helped Hong Kong's image.

None of this had much immediate connection with the handover, but it has been an unfortunate turn of events for Hong Kong's Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, China's hand-picked man in the special administrative region. Mr Tung has seen monthly tourist arrivals plunge 25 per cent since before the handover, with Japanese visitors down 50 per cent. Profits at Hong Kong's flagship airline Cathay Pacific have fallen 57 per cent, forcing the company to lay off 870 employees this year. The premier Lane Crawford department store, Hong Kong's Harrods, shed 30 staff this week. A store official said: "Quite obviously, we have been dragged into the recent economic storm."

While Hong Kong expects more visitors from mainland China to ease the tourist drought, travellers from other parts of Asia will tell you that the territory has lost its cachet as one of the last holdouts of colonialism. Today, for many Asian tourists, Hong Kong is just another city off the China coast.

At the Journalists' Association ball last week, a local scribe described how he would revive Hong Kong's tourist appeal overnight. "You take down that Stalinist red flag with its yellow stars and quietly put it away. Then you will see the situation improve. People just don't like that image."

Leading dissident democrat arrested in Beijing

BY JAMES PRINGLE

IN A move that could embarrass Zhu Rongji, China's new Prime Minister who was fêted by European politicians in London yesterday, Chinese security police arrested the leading dissident, Xu Wenli, in Beijing and seized his computer, letters and photographs, according to his wife.

His wife, He Xintong, said her husband, 54, a leading member of the 1978-79 democracy wall movement, who had recently called for the setting-up of a human rights watchdog group, had been taken from their home yesterday and she did not know where he was.

"They confiscated our computer, fax machine, photos in which he is shown with friends, letters and almost anything with words," she said by telephone, adding: "The house is a complete mess."

Officials at the Beijing Public Security Bureau declined to comment on the arrest, which comes as Mr Zhu is seeking to present an image of a more open China at the Asia-Europe Meeting in London.

Analysts speculated that the arrest could have been ordered to embarrass Mr Zhu, who replaced the hardline Li Peng last month.

Mr Xu was detained in 1981 and given a 15-year jail sentence for urging democratic reforms and for defending a fellow dissident, Wei Jingsheng, arrested in 1979. Mr Xu was released on parole in 1993.

A rumour that the jailed student protest leader, Wang Dan, would soon be released in a deal with the United States was dismissed by Tang Jiaxuan, the Chinese Foreign Minister, during the summit. But Mr Tang stopped short of an outright denial that Mr Wang could be released before June.

□ **Geneva:** A row has broken out over a recent fact-finding mission by United Nations experts to jails in China and Tibet, after a human rights group claimed that prisoners were beaten up once the experts left (Peter Capella writes).

Human Rights Watch said it had reliable information that several prisoners were interrogated, beaten and placed in solitary confinement after one of them staged a protest during a visit to Dratchi prison in Tibet by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.

The Chinese mission to the UN in Geneva denied that any reprisals took place and told the working group that all prisoners were "in fairly good health".

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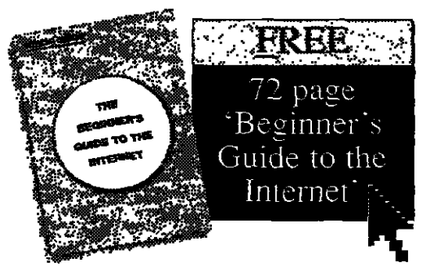
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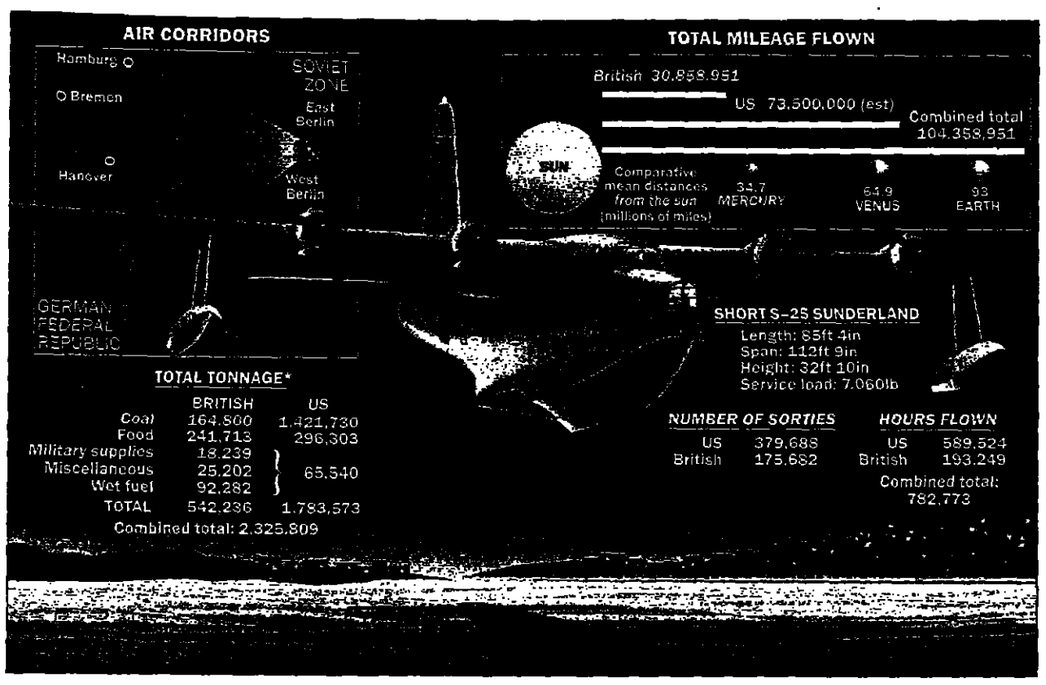
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Beautiful noise that kept Berlin alive

City prepares to mark 50th anniversary of the Allied airlift, writes Roger Boyes



Some battle-scarred Dakota and a Catalina seaplane are being painted and polished for one of the biggest commemorative events of the post-Cold War era: the 50th anniversary of the Berlin airlift in which British and American aircraft broke the Soviet stranglehold on the city.

The full-blown airlift began in June 1948, but this weekend Berliners are remembering the dress rehearsal in April — the so-called "Baby airlift" when Allied planes defied the Soviet blockade of rail links by ferrying essential goods by air. The celebrations will last all year and spill into next, but already they have caused controversy.

One idea, suggested by a German officer, is to invite Russian pilots. "We want the Partnership for Peace concept to work with the Russians and not think in the old frozen ways," says Captain Rene Lancelle. The plan has set off an avalanche of criticism. "How on earth are we supposed to explain away to West Berliners an invitation to Russian fighter pilots?" asked a bemused official from the Berlin Senate, Hans-Rudolf Zscherpack. Or, he might have added, the widows of British and American aircrew who were buzzed and sometimes forced to crash by the MiG jets.

Setting the historical record straight is part of the point of the commemoration, in an age when many young people do not even realise that West Berlin was once a vulnerable and isolated city stuck in the middle of communist-controlled East Germany. The British have been upset by a brochure distributed by the German Aerospace Industry Association which depicts the airlift as essentially a US operation. "All available US transport squadrons were ordered to Germany to be joined later by British, Canadian, French, South African and other Commonwealth forces," says the brochure. In fact, the airlift was a combined US-Britain operation: 40 of the 77 aircrew who died were British.

The need to identify clearly the British role in this critical Cold War event has prompted a search for an airworthy Sunderland, the large, clumsy seaplane which ferried food and fuel on to the lakes of West Berlin. "The only Sunderland we know of now is in the US," says pilot Keith Sissons who will be flying a Catalina to Berlin to ensure at least some British representation on the water front. The Catalina, owned by the British company Plane-Sailing, helped a pilot to win the Victoria Cross during the war and is almost beautiful. For the most part, the RAF used Dakotas, Hastings and Yorks: heavy-duty transporters that lifted sacks of flour, coal and even banknotes to the Berliners. But it was the Sunderlands that captured the heart of many Berliners, including Helmut Bötel, now a 68-year-old retired electrician, but in those days a teenager fascinated by seaplanes. "We knew they were coming to help us, not hurt us."



Supplies are unloaded by the light of a Jeep

At the peak of the airlift, in a year of often dangerous flying, planes were landing in Berlin at the rate of one a minute. On an average day 100 US and British planes were in the air on the way to, or way back from, Berlin. The RAF was helped by civilian contractors — often run by men who had seen wartime service, with pilots still in uniform — and together they flew more than 175,000 sorties, carrying 164,000 tons of coal, 240,000 tons of food as well as petrol, gas canisters, military and medical supplies. An entire power plant was lifted after first being taken apart and distributed among separate planes.

The Americans, with a much bigger air force, transported about three times as much as the British.

The significance of the airlift goes well beyond an early display of solidarity with West Germany, and of determination not to surrender West Berlin to Stalin. First, it established that three Western Allied powers — the French contributed their airport at Berlin-Tegel and worked hard to expand the landing strips — were not so much occupiers as protectors.

Berliners who had learnt to identify, and fear, the sound of distant British bombers, now ran to the airports to greet their arrival. "It was such a beautiful noise — we knew that it was keeping us alive," says Regina Wargener, now an 81-year-old grandmother who gave birth to a daughter in the midst of the airlift. Berliners called the planes *Rosinenbomber* — raisin bombers.

But the airlift also showed that a huge army could be deployed for purely humanitarian purposes: a model for the UN peacekeeping forces.

The casualties were caused not so much by Soviet harassment — the planes were travelling along the three established corridors — but rather by the sheer volume of traffic and the technical strains on the aircraft and pilots. An American C47 smashed into the side of a Berlin block of flats. An RAF plane crashed inside East Germany; three members of the crew were killed outright. A fourth survived but died weeks later in an East German military hospital.

An American pilot, Kenneth Slaker — now a retired 77-year-old general — found his propellers cutting out and parachuted into an East German potato field. "My first thought was — get out of here or you'll end up in Siberia!" A friendly East German guided him across the frontier and stayed in the West himself.

HULTON GETTY



The millionth coal bag to be airlifted to Berlin is unloaded from a US Skymaster

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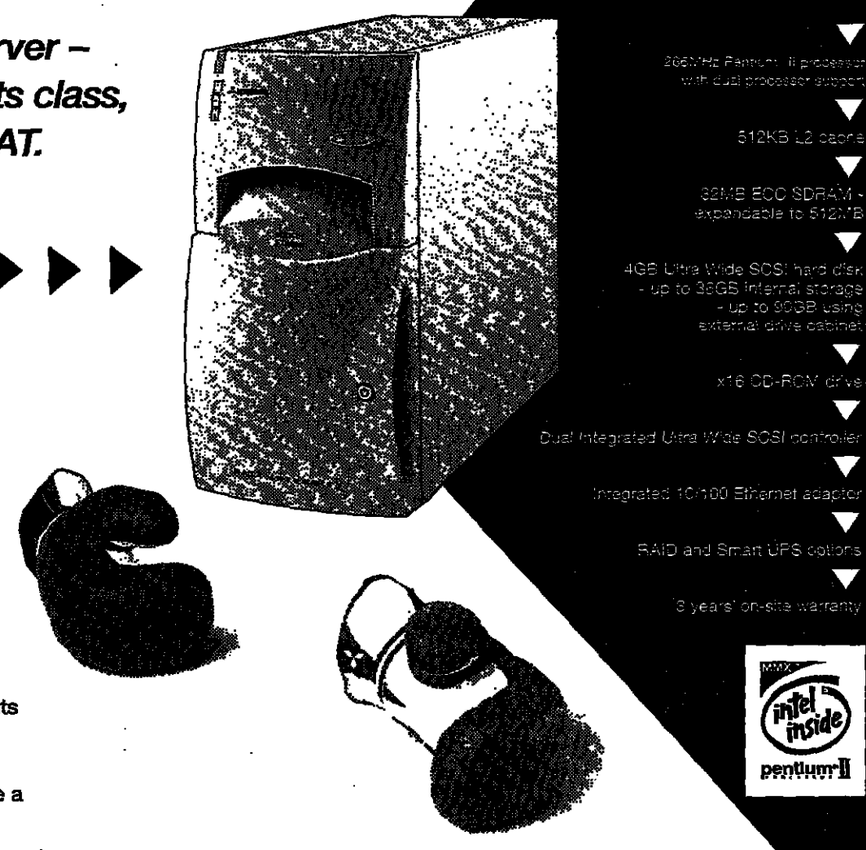
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Rambler has a winning Way

A Briton is giving Turkey a new bearing on its history, writes Andrew Finkel



Kate Clow walks through the hills behind Maden, Turkey, on the Lycian Way, a network of pathways that once linked an ancient civilisation and which she has re-created

AFTER years of walking through the Turkish Mediterranean countryside, a lone Englishwoman has recreated a network of roads and mountain paths that once linked the cities of ancient Lycia.

Kate Clow, 50, who abandoned her life as a London computer expert and moved to Turkey in the early 1990s, is helping to ferment a revolution in Turkey, indirectly challenging the country's military, the Government and even the major bank which last month awarded her the top prize in a prestigious environmental contest.

Ms Clow has documented a route that goes from Fethiye, the ancient Telmessos, to the city of Antalya, where she now lives. It follows ancient cobbled roads, goat trails and paths still used by nomadic herdsman.

It also follows more than a thousand years of history, passing graves from 700BC to unexcavated Byzantine monasteries which date back to AD800. If walked at a single stretch, it takes just under six weeks.

Her notion is to create a Turkish equivalent of the French *grandes randonées*, long-distance walks that are carefully waymarked and described with a detailed guide. It was this proposal that was recognised as one of the "Four Ideas for Tomorrow" — a much publicised competition in Turkey soliciting ways to make the country better.

Ms Clow has lived in Turkey for seven years and has taken dual nationality. It was under her alternate name of Kardelen Karli that she won her prize. This translates as "Snowdrop Snowy", odd even in her adopted country, and it was a puzzled audience of Istanbul glitterati who saw her appear from clouds of dry ice and a lavish laser display to deliver her acceptance speech in a broadly accented Turkish. "Mad dogs and English," muttered one former ambassador. Eccentric but determined, she now hopes to use some of her prize money to publish her own account of the "Lycian Way", which unlike the French example also contains a description of the wildlife and historic remains encountered en route.

The Lycians make their first appearance in history as allies of the Trojans in Homer's *Iliad* and were the last people in Asia Minor to surrender to the Romans. "Locked away in their mountainous country, they had a fierce love of freedom and independence," wrote George Bean in the standard archaeological guide to the region.

These are characteristics with which Ms Clow clearly empathises. Her first fight is with the Turkish Army: she is trying to persuade it to declassify the large-scale ordnance survey maps that are essential equipment for any rambler. "The release of those maps would change the face of Turkish tourism," she said.



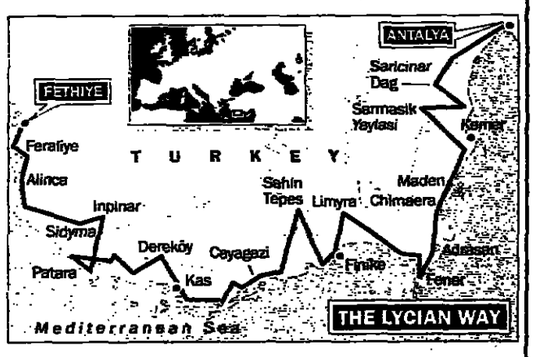


En route: a monastery and a carving used as a doorstep

She also targets the Tourism Ministry, which she believes is whittling away at the still undeveloped forest lands by opening them up to mass tourism. She dismisses the ministry's idea of guides leading large parties of walkers through the hills. "That destroys your independence," she said. She herself never bothers to travel with a tent, and is accepted in the villages she passes through as a respected traveller and guest.

She is prepared to guide small parties of like-minded people whom she believes would be similarly welcomed. If more people took to the hills it would be a way of reenforcing the local economies and of preserving rather than over-powering the local way of life. "The idea of protecting a route represents a different approach to rural conservation for Turkey," according to Nergis Yazgan, head of the Turkish Society to Protect Wildlife and chairwoman of the jury that awarded Ms Clow her prize. Ms Yazgan herself complains that the country's national parks are poorly maintained and too often resented by local villagers who see them simply as areas in which everything is restricted. "Getting people to use the countryside is the first step to its preservation," Ms Yazgan said.

This means changing the attitude of a nation which — having just left the countryside — is content to return by car for a Sunday and then leave rubbish behind before heading back to the city. Although there are increasing number of trekking clubs in Turkey, Ms Clow complains that too often they are manned by large groups of "peak grabbers", who race to the top and are not always wildly interested in what they see on the way.



She is pleased that even in the short time since winning her prize her walk has become the object of great interest from local clubs. "The countryside belongs to the people, not the State. A lot of people here don't see the difference," Ms Kazgan said.

Ms Clow is hoping to enlist Garanti Bank, the organisation which gave her the prize, to safeguard what she hopes will be the first of many long-distance walks.

WORLD SUMMARY

Basilica survives quake

Rome: An earthquake shook Umbria and Marche yesterday, causing panic six months after earthquakes killed 11 people and damaged the Basilica of St Francis at Assisi (Richard Owen writes). Italian television reported that 350 houses had been damaged and up to 1,000 people made homeless yesterday. Friars at Assisi said the tremor, which measured 5.0 on the Richter scale, had not caused further damage to the fabric of the great 13th century church.

Bomber jailed for 240 years

New York: World Trade Centre bomber Eyad Ismoil, 26, was yesterday sentenced to 240 years in prison for the 1993 blast that killed six people. Ismoil, a Palestinian, admitted driving the explosives-loaded truck into the centre's car park. His co-conspirator, Pakistani Ramzi Yousef, 29, is serving 240 years in solitary confinement. *(AFP)*

Luther King widow's plea

New York: Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King, has appealed to President Clinton to investigate her husband's assassination (Tunki Varadarajan writes). James Earl Ray, the man convicted of killing the civilrights leader 30 years ago, has consistently denied his guilt.

Le Pen inquiry by prosecutors

Munich: The prosecutor's office here has asked for the European parliamentary immunity of Jean-Marie Le Pen, the French far-right leader, to be lifted to open the way for a possible indictment for inciting racial hatred over his comments that Nazi gas chambers were "a detail" of history. *(AFP)*

Lorena Bobbitt wins acquittal

Manassas: Lorena Gallo, the woman famous for cutting off her ex-husband John Bobbitt's penis has been acquitted in Virginia after allegedly assaulting her mother in a fight over family bills. *(AP)*

US 'ignored murder evidence'

Washington: A former US ambassador to El Salvador yesterday accused the US Government of ignoring compelling evidence that top Salvadoran military officers had ordered the murders of three nuns and a lay worker 18 years ago (Tom Rhodes writes).

His criticism of the former Administration came as four former Salvadoran guardsmen convicted in the killings of the American nuns said for the first time that the murders were directed by their superiors.

Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel, the nuns, and Jean Donovan, a lay worker, were abducted, raped and shot on December 2, 1980.

Robert White, then US Ambassador in El Salvador, said: "I am very pleased this has come out. The State Department only had to read our telegrams to know about the compelling evidence suggesting that top officers gave the orders. It's simply wrong to leave four men in prison for following orders."

Israel in threat to abandon pullout

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

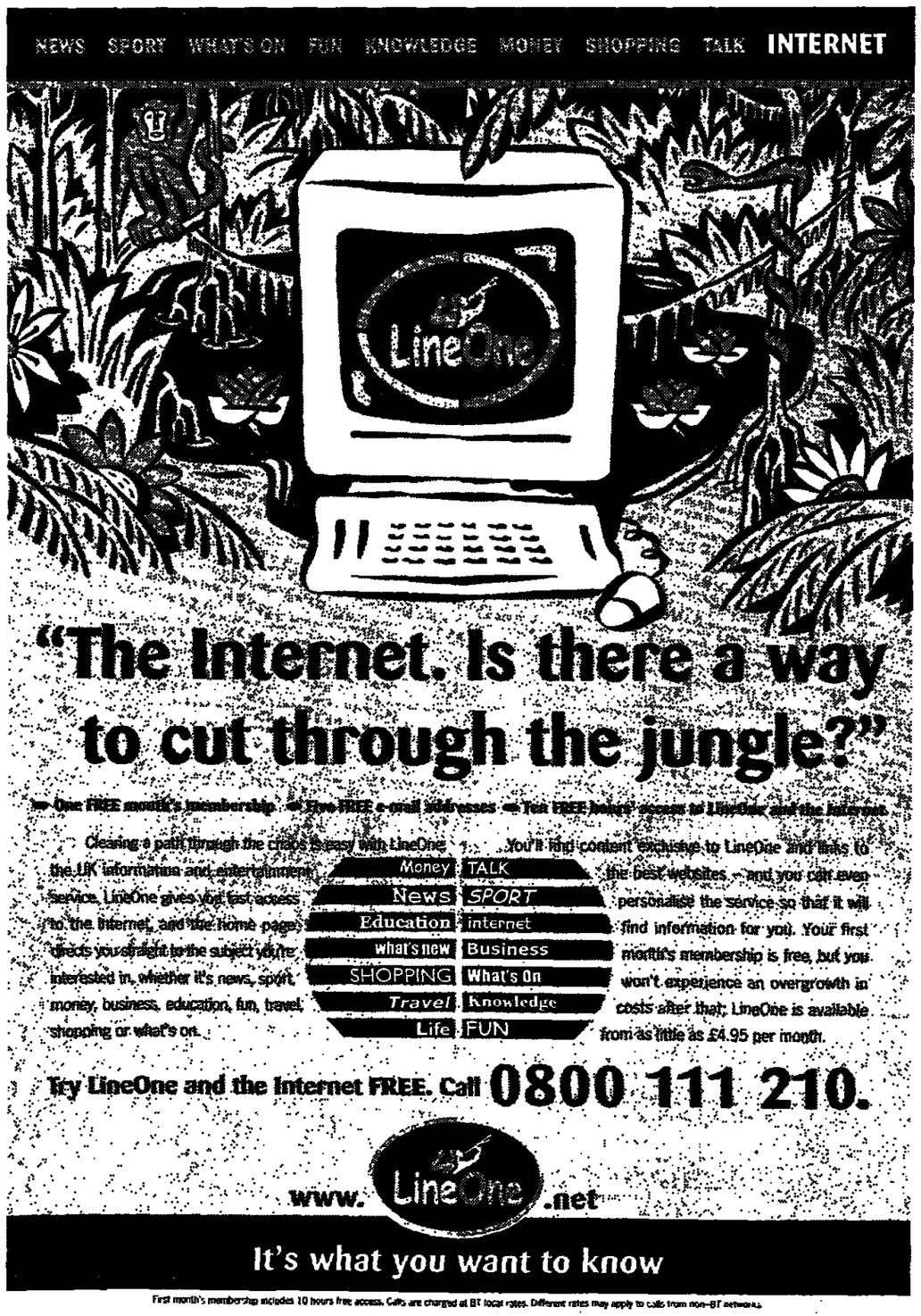
ISRAEL warned Palestinian leaders yesterday that prospects for a further troop withdrawal in the West Bank will be torpedoed if Hamas carries out threats to launch a new wave of terror attacks.

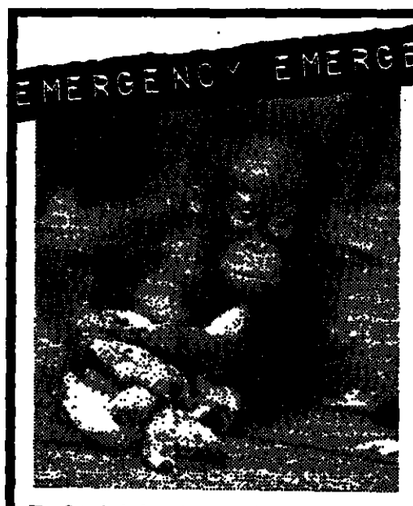
The warning from Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, coincided with a new pledge by Hamas to exact international as well as domestic revenge for the alleged assassination last Sunday of Muhyideen al-Sharif, a bombmaker, allegedly by the Israeli secret service.

Israeli security chiefs announced that the country's newly strenghthened army and police forces would remain on red alert until after the 50th independence day celebrations on April 30. Petrol bombs were thrown at Israeli troops in Jerusalem's Old City and at a woman settler in the West Bank who was slightly injured.

The escalation in tensions added urgency to Tony Blair's European peace mission to Israel and the occupied territories later this month and raised new questions about his tentative plans to stay overnight in Gaza, the main Hamas stronghold.

Mr Netanyahu, who has repeatedly denied any question of Israeli involvement in the killing of Sharif in the self-rule city of Ramallah, warned the Palestinian Authority that those casting blame on Israel would be held directly responsible for any new Hamas violence.





Animals dying in forest fires.

The fires in Indonesia are raging again, forcing animals out of the forests to die at the hands of poachers.

These forests are one of the last remaining habitats of the orang-utan, so this rare animal is now facing extinction. The life-saving rains may not come until October.

The WSPA-funded Wanariset Orang-Utan Rescue Centre has given sanctuary to hundreds of orphaned baby orang-utans, adult orangs, sun bears and many other animals. Now the Centre itself is threatened by the flames. The 3,500 hectare research forest around it has already been destroyed.

Please help us save the Centre, and the animals that depend on it, by sending a donation straight away.

WSPA is urgently sending food and veterinary materials to the Centre. Rescue teams ae already risking their lives to save animals from the fires.

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WSPA World Society for the Protection of Animals

Best places to spend Easter

The strong pound means Britons can shop cheaply across the world, write **Guy Walters** and **Agnes Bell**

THE Great Easter Shopaway begins next weekend as 1.7 million people leave Britain for holidays, their wallets bulging with one of the world's most desirable currencies.

The spending power of the average Briton abroad has risen dramatically in the past year since Labour's election victory and Gordon Brown's decision to let sterling soar. A survey by *The Times* shows that a basketful of fashionable consumer goods can be bought much more cheaply in all the world's great shopping cities than at home.



The best buys are only a ferry ride away in Dublin, where the strength of sterling against the Irish punt allows Britons to save nearly 19 per cent on holiday gifts. There are also big savings in New York, Athens, Madrid and Bangkok. Even the traditionally dearer continental capitals — Paris, Brussels, Berlin and Rome — have become bargain basements.

Our survey found that Bangkok was the cheapest place to buy an All Saints CD and a Big Mac, New York was top for clothes bargains, from *Levi 501s to Oshkosh* baby dungarees, although Rome had the lowest price for a Benetton v-neck jumper. Berlin had the cheapest Gucci's Envy perfume and Athens the best-priced Louis Vuitton Noé Bay shoulder bag. But be discerning: the Body Shop eye gel that costs £2.70 in Britain is priced at £4.50 in Thailand.

Travel firms have been quick to exploit lurching exchange rates in their promotional material. The Greeks' decision to devalue the drachma to qualify for membership of the single currency is providing a much-needed help for its tourism trade.

Rachel Shirborn of Thomas Cook says that the number of people going abroad at Easter has risen by 18 per cent since last year. She had no doubt about the best-value destination: "Greece is amazing. Because of the devalued drachma, our bookings for Greek islands have shot up by 22 per cent."

A record number of Britons are expected to cross the Irish Sea. Demand for the punt has grown by 19 per cent in British bureaux de change in the past year. "Last year, nearly three million visited from the UK," John Lahiffe, of the Irish Tourist Board, said. "This year we are expecting to reach that number by as early as midsummer."

Far Eastern economies became favourite shopping destinations when currencies like the Thai baht and the Malaysian ringgit went into freefall. Some Britons have gone to Asia for winter sunshine holidays and bought houses on impulse because they can cost only £8,000.

Visitors to Malaysia are seeing their money go nearly twice as far. The pound buys 6.28 ringgits instead of 3.96 a year ago. The economic downturn is forcing Far Eastern countries to try hard to entice visitors. A 14-night holiday at the five-star Pelangi Beach, Langkawi, is on offer at £599 per person, a saving of £336. American Express, comparing exchange rates with a year ago, says that the pound has gained 15 per cent on the Portuguese escudo and 14 per cent on the Dutch guilder.

Jackie Gibson of the Association of British Travel Agents said: "As ever, the most popular destinations will be Majorca and the Canary Islands, as well as the classic cities such as Dublin, Paris and Amsterdam." France will be the favourite for those simply wanting a spending spree.

The US dollar is one currency against which the pound has gained little and demand for trips to America has increased by only 1 per cent.

Travel, Weekend pages 25-35



For sterling shoppers, New York sells the cheapest Levi 501s and Oshkosh baby dungarees (above and top right); Bangkok is best for the All Saints CD and Big Mac; go to Rome for a Benetton v-neck jumper (bottom right) and Berlin for Gucci's Envy perfume (bottom centre). But don't look out for Body Shop eye gel in Thailand

THE RISE OF THE POUND

AGAINST £ STERLING

	Easter '97	April '98	Difference (%)
Thai Baht	38.82	61.52	58.5%
Greek Drachma	420	523.67	24.7%
Irish Pound	1.003	1.1916	18.9%
Spanish Peseta	224.08	253.93	13.3%
Belgian Franc	54.95	61.99	12.8%
French Franc	8.92	10.06	12.8%
German Mark	2.673	3.0146	12.8%
Italian Lira	2647	2968	12.1%
US Dollar	1.582	1.6311	4.9%

Rates supplied by Thomas Cook

BARGAIN BASEMENT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST PRICES

CITIES	All Saints CD	Levi 501s	Big Mac	Gucci's Envy perfume	Benetton V-neck jumper	Oshkosh baby dungarees	Louis Vuitton Noé bag	PERCENTAGE SAVING
LONDON	£12.99	£50.00	£1.84	£25.00	£45.00	£26.00	£295.00	-
DUBLIN	£12.60	£33.61	£1.55	£21.85	£37.82	£23.53	n/a	18.5%
NEW YORK CITY	£10.38	£31.77	£1.46	£24.43	£53.75	£7.33	£256.57	15.5%
ATHENS	£10.86	£42.86	£1.20	n/a	£37.71	£27.61	£249.52	14%
MADRID	£10.56	£43.01	£1.47	£19.58	£33.66	n/a	£270.26	12%
BANGKOK	£8.19	£41.87	£0.85	£41.71	n/a	£13.23	£367.82	10.5%
PARIS	£12.64	£46.67	£1.74	£20.90	£38.81	£28.26	£263.68	9.5%
BRUSSELS	£11.20	£43.51	£1.76	£21.76	£38.61	£25.80	£275.67	8%
BERLIN	£9.93	£52.65	£1.64	£19.53	£39.40	£26.16	£274.83	7%
ROME	£12.68	£63.55	£1.51	£33.44	£33.11	£21.74	£277.60	3%

Source: Virgin Megastore, The Economist

EASTER BREAKS

FROM UNDER £23

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Ashford	£45
Aylesbury	£45
Basildon	£45
Basingstoke	£45
Belfast	£45
Bexley	£45
Birmingham	£45
Birmingham Airport	£45
Birmingham City	£45
Bolton* The Beaumont	£45
Brentwood	£45
Brighouse	£45
Bristol	£45
Cambridge	£45
Cardiff	£45
Cardiff City	£45
Carlisle	£45
Chester	£45
Colchester	£45
Coventry	£45
Coventry* Coventry Hill Hotel	£45
Croydon	£45
Derby/Burton	£45
Dover	£45
Dublin Airport	IR£45
Edinburgh	£45
Epping	£45
Fareham	£45
Farnborough	£45
Glasgow Airport	£45
Glasgow City	£45
Glasgow Erskine Bridge	£45
Gloucester	£45
Grimsby	£45
Guildford	£45
Havant	£45
Haydock	£45
Hemel Hempstead	£45
High Wycombe	£45
Hull	£45
Hull Marina	£45
Ipswich	£45
Lancaster	£45
Leeds/Bradford	£45
Leeds/Selby	£45
Leicester	£45
Lincoln	£45
Liverpool* The Gladstone	£65
London Bloomsbury	£65
London Kensington	£65
London Regent's Park	£65
London Gatwick	£65
London Heathrow	£45
Luton* Luton Gateway	£45
Maidstone	£45
Manchester	£45
Manchester Airport	£45
Milton Keynes	£45
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	£45
Norwich	£45
Nottingham City	£45
Nottingham/Derby	£45
Peterborough	£45
Plymouth	£45
Portsmouth	£45
Preston	£45
Reading	£45
Rochester	£45
Rugby/Northampton	£45
Sheffield	£45
South Mimms	£45
Southampton	£45
Southampton* The Polygon	£45
Southampton/Eastleigh	£45
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Banbury	Whately Hall	£45
Bath	The Bath Spa	£45
Bath	The Francis	£45
Blackpool	The Imperial	£45
Box Hill	Burford Bridge	£45
Brandon	The Brandon Hall	£45
Camberley	Frimley Hall	£45
Canterbury	Chaucer Hotel	£45
Cheltenham	The Queen's	£45
Chester	Blossoms Hotel	£45
Dartmouth	Dart Marina	£45
Dorking	The White Horse Hotel	£45
Dovedale	Peveril of the Peak	£45
Dunster	The Luttrell Arms	£45
Exeter	The Southgate	£45
Farnham	The Bush	£45
Grasmere	The Swan	£45
Harrogate	The Majestic	£45
Helmsley	The Black Swan	£45
Hereford	The Green Dragon	£45
Hertingfordbury	The White Horse	£45
Kingston	Kingston Lodge	£45
Lavenham	The Swan	£45
Leeds	Queen's Hotel	£45
Lincoln	The White Hart	£45
Long Melford	The Bull	£45
Manchester*	Victoria & Albert	£45
Marlborough	The Castle & Ball	£45
Marlow	The Compleat Angler	£45
Matlock	New Bath Hotel	£45
Melrose/Clitheroe	The Ancenoth Hotel	£45
North Berwick	The Marine	£45
Oundle	The Talbot	£45
Oxford	Eastgate Hotel	£45
Oxford	The Randolph	£45
Padstow	The Metropole	£45
Romsey/New Forest	The White Horse	£45
Ross-on-Wye	The Royal	£45
Rothley	Rothley Court	£45
Rye	The George	£45
Salisbury	The White Hart	£45
Sherborne*	The Sherborne	£45
Southwell	The Saracen's Head	£45
St Andrews	Rusacks Hotel	£45
Staines	Thames Lodge	£45
Stratford-upon-Avon	Alveston Manor	£45
Stratford-upon-Avon	The Shakespeare	£45
Thetford	The Bell	£45
Torquay	The Imperial	£45
Ullswater	Leeming House	£45
Winchester	The Wessex	£45
Windermere	The Old England	£45
Windsor	The Castle	£45
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Crime record poses threat to New Deal

Up to 60,000 in jobless group are ex-offenders, writes **Nicholas Wood**

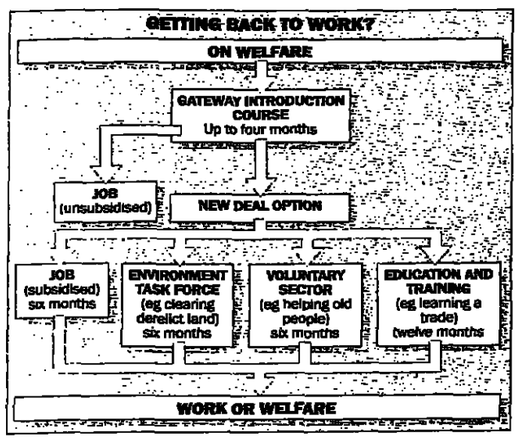
HIGH levels of crime and drug abuse among the young jobless threaten the success of Gordon Brown's £3.2 billion New Deal Welfare to Work programme, which will be launched nationwide next week. Up to 50 per cent of the initial target group of 118,000 18 to 24-year-olds out of work for more than six months have a criminal record, according to Employment Service figures.

A big drop in youth unemployment over the last five years has meant that many of those left on the dole are bordering on the unemployable. Moreover, business leaders are warning that, with unemployment set to rise later in the year, many of this "hard to place" group will fail to get subsidised six-month jobs with private firms.

They are predicting that thousands of young job seekers will be diverted into other, less attractive options in the scheme — the environmental taskforce, working for charities or full-time education and training. Spending per head on the New Deal group will be up to £4,000 a year.

The warnings are backed up by employment experts, who are urging ministers to expand special remedial programmes for ex-offenders and drug abusers during the four-month induction or "Gateway" period.

An estimate prepared by the South Yorkshire Probation Service for the New Deal plan in Rotherham suggests that more than 50 per cent of the target group are offenders or ex-offenders. Probation Service sources put the national figure at around 40 per cent. These figures are backed up by Home Office statistics showing that 20 per cent of young people have a criminal conviction by the age of 24. Levels of offending among the New Deal target group are thought to be higher than for the population as a whole.



In January, 12 New Deal pilot schemes were launched in areas including Sheffield and Rotherham, South Derbyshire, Newcastle and Gateshead, and Swansea.

Ruth Lea, head of policy for the Institute of Directors, said that she feared for the success of the scheme. An IOD survey had found that 73 per cent of its members were worried about the potentially "unsuitable nature" of New Deal candidates. Dr Lea added: "You cannot spend your time as a hard-pressed managing director of a small firm keeping your eye all the time on new people. If people are light-fingered, then that would be very difficult to get over."

John Philpott, director of the Employment Policy Institute and author of a report this week with the Prince's Trust on the New Deal, said: "Small and medium-sized employers may think twice about taking on somebody [with a criminal record]. Ultimately, these sorts of employers hold the key as to whether this will be successful."

Mike Ward, director of the Manchester *think-tank*, the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, said that the fall in youth employment — down from around 400,000 five years ago — had left a hard core of young jobless with multiple disadvantages. He backed Mr Philpott in urging ministers to spend more on projects designed to rehabilitate drug users and offenders.

New Deal organisers in Sheffield are running special 13-week schemes to help drug users and ex-offenders. They have budgeted for 180 ex-offenders and 200 drug users, although the scheme's managers believe that the true numbers are higher.

Experts are also worried about the reluctance of the Employment Service to inform employers if a candidate had a criminal record. Officials in Sheffield and Rotherham said that they would seek the applicant's permission before telling an employer that he had a criminal record.

Leading article, page 23


JOHN HOULIHAN/GUZELIAN

Lee Jackson, 23, who is awaiting trial, enjoying his New Deal placement

How job scheme can help those in trouble

By Nicholas Wood

LEE JACKSON and Mark O'Leary, a convicted burglar, typify the problems faced by those running the New Deal.

Mr Jackson, 23, has been in and out of work since leaving a Sheffield comprehensive at 16 with four higher-grade GCSEs. He is shortly to stand trial charged with causing grievous bodily harm after a late-night fight in the city centre. He denies the charge, claiming self-defence in an incident that took place several months before he obtained his £150-a-week New Deal job with AMK Fence-In.

He is enjoying being off the dole: "I need a bit of motivation, but I don't want to sit about all day doing nowt."

His boss, Andrew Kynoch, is relaxed about the scrap. "You can get into a fight any time," he said. But he would be worried about taking on someone with a record of theft, not least because his gangs of fence-erectors work on wealthy properties.

Nor is he impressed by the overall quality of New Deal candidates. He has taken on five since January; three walked out within days, one because it was raining. "To be honest, they are useless. They have got this cushion behind them: they can drop out and get the [dole] money."

By the age of 13, Mr O'Leary (not his real name) was skipping lessons at his South Yorkshire comprehensive and sniffing glue. He left school at 16 with one higher-grade GCSE and began a YTS job at a smart clothes shop in Sheffield. It lasted a year. He was sacked for lateness and lost his other job on a milk-round when £300 disappeared from the takings.

By now Mr O'Leary had a drugs problem and was stealing, even from his mother's purse, to fund his habit. "I started off on cannabis. I worked my way to amphetamines, to LSD, to Ecstasy, to crack cocaine, to heroin. You have to rob to fund your habit. I was stealing everything I could. I was breaking into houses. My girlfriend warned me: 'You will end up in jail.'"

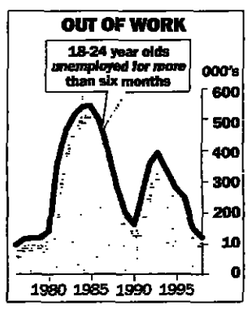
But first came a caution, then a conditional discharge, then a fine, next community service and finally probation. One night, the police were waiting outside when he fled a house after disturbing the occupant.

At 20, Mr O'Leary was convicted of aggravated burglary and sentenced to three years. He gave up heroin in prison because he could not afford it. He set about changing his life.

"You have a lot of time to think in jail. I realised that I was on the wrong path. I knew I could do better. I tried to be a show-off, but I am not one."

Mr O'Leary joined New Deal almost as soon as he was released in January. He told his personal adviser that he wanted to be "one of those who stay out [of jail] for ever". At the second attempt, he secured a job with an engineering firm. He is paid £150 a week; the company receives a subsidy of £60 a week for six months.

Mr O'Leary, 22, who is living with his mother, is enjoying life because he at last has the satisfaction of paying his own way. His personnel manager said: "We are happy to accept that the past is past, so long as you do your job."




Kynoch: said some recruits walked out

Courtroom of Dickens and Wilde sentenced to closure

By Alan Hamilton

CHARLES DICKENS was a reporter there, Napoleon III a witness in a fraud case and Oscar Wilde a defendant in the libel case that brought about his downfall. But yesterday, after more than 200 years, one of the country's oldest and best-known courts heard its last case.

Marlborough Street Magistrates' Court, tucked behind Regent Street in Central London, has been found guilty of inefficiency and sentenced to closure, its carnival of colourful cases transferred to larger, more cost-effective courts.

Its last two stipendiary magistrates, Daphne Wickham and Timothy Workman, said in a statement as they left the bench for the last time: "We regret that it has been necessary to close this historic court." Joyce Gubbay, deputy chief clerk at Marlborough Street for the past 21 years, said: "We are all very upset that this beautiful old court is closing."

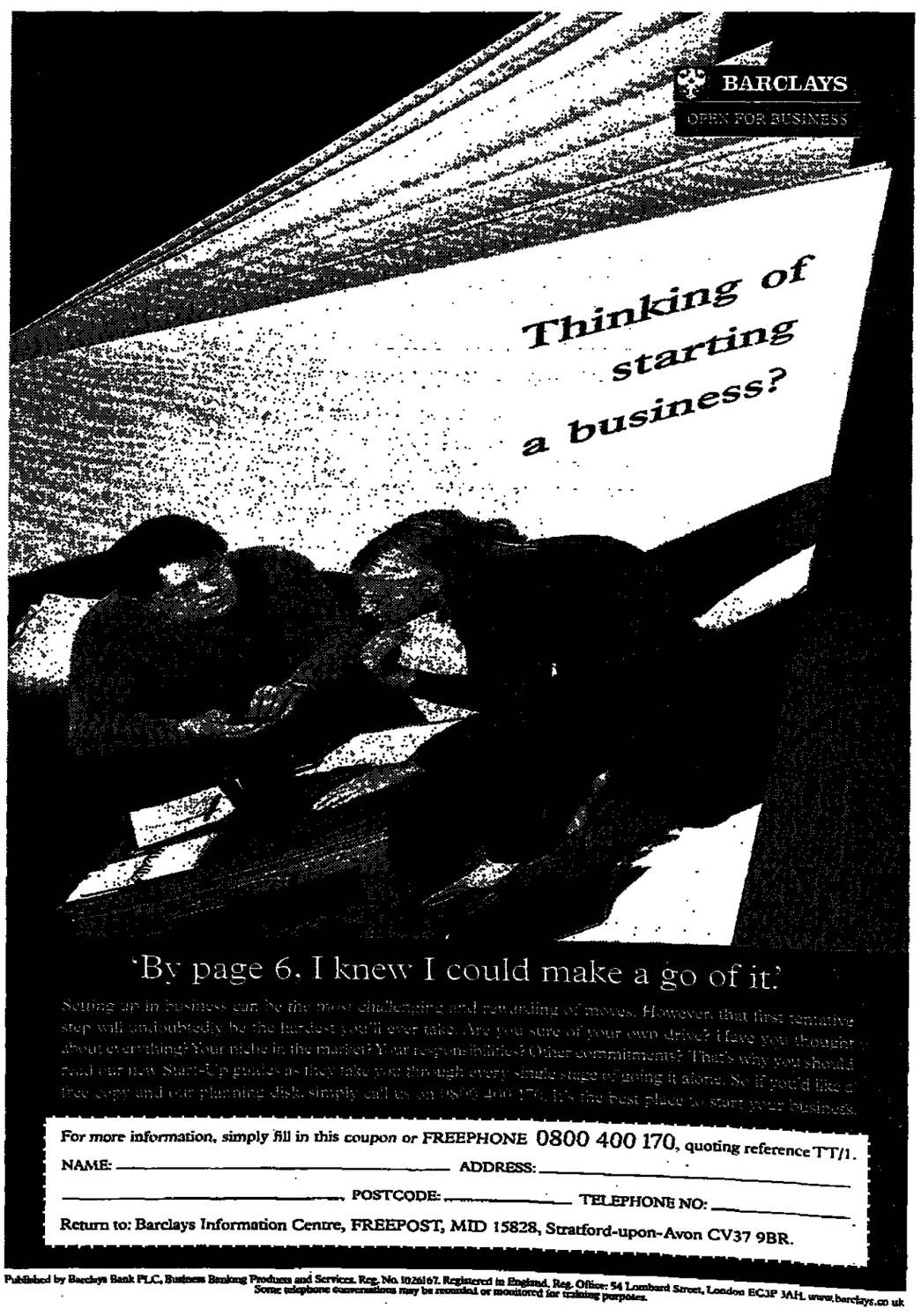
Marlborough Street was opened in 1795. A more recent procession of accused has included Soho vice kings of the Fifties and Sixties, the Rolling Stone Brian Jones on drugs charges, anti-poll tax rioters of the 1990s, as well as a remarkably international array of shoplifters forever being caught in Oxford Street.

In the Seventies, the court was presided over by the urbane St John Harmsworth. He was so understanding towards the Soho call girls who constantly came up before him that, on the day of his retirement, they showered him with good-luck cards. He responded by writing off all their outstanding fines.

The same quality of mercy was evident when Miss Wickham dealt with her last case yesterday, a crop-haired, tracksuited Mark Gavin Jones, on the eve of his birthday, accused of shoplifting in Oxford Street.

"Tomorrow you are 21 and you are going to start a new life," she said. "We are also all going to start a new life tomorrow, because this court is closing." She gave him an absolute discharge.





VALERIE GROVE MEETS: **SIR DEREK HORNBY**

Seamless rise of a rail knight

ALAN WELLER



Sir Derek Hornby: life changed when he won a place for boys from humble homes at public school. "We were all 'Ampshire lads," he said. "Talked a bit loik that"

"This is the worst day of my career," declared Sir Derek Hornby. It was January 29, when John Prescott threatened that the State would take over Eurostar unless London and Continental Railways could resurrect their £5.4 billion high-speed Channel Tunnel rail link within a month. A fraught two months ensued while deals were thrashed out, relieved for Sir Derek only by a weekend at the Gazelle d'Or in Morocco. Now it transpires that the rail link will be built after all — but without Sir Derek in the engine-driver's seat.

Sir Derek, known as "Dublo" at school, though he never possessed a Hornby train set, desperately wanted to see this project through. But he decided to go, he said, pouring a glass of chardonnay, because "we took a fair bit of flak personally, so it's best to acknowledge that by stepping down".

Sir Derek, as well as being father and father-in-law to two bestselling novelists — Nick Hornby and Robert Harris — has hitherto seemed to glide seamlessly through life in the upper echelons of management from Mobil Oil to Rank Xerox, switching boardrooms when headhunted, being the sort of chap that other chaps want in the chair. (Good brain, genial manner, and can charm birds out of trees.) But he was not born into this milieu of prosperous suits. He was eldest of five children of a soldier who was killed in 1942 when Derek was 12. His mother's widow's pension was meagre; his youngest brother was only six; he took a job as a greengrocer's errand boy so he could take his mother to the pictures. The family rallied in the working-class way, and Derek went to live with his grandmother a mile away. "An amazing woman. She could barely read, and my grandfather had never worked since the Battle of the Somme, so she had no money, but gave away all she had."

His life was changed by the Fleming Report — the public schools' pre-emptive strike against the forthcoming Labour government — under which clever boys from humble homes were offered places at public schools instead of good old Bournemouth Grammar. Young Derek was picked, with seven others, to go to Canford School, which recently revitalised its finances by selling, for £7 million, a 3,000-year-old Assyrian bas-relief that had hung in the tuck-shop for decades.

The grammar boys were known at first as "the oiks". "We were all 'Ampshire lads," says Sir Derek. "Talked a bit loik that. Accent distinctions were much more pronounced than they are today." But the lads were good at cricket, and by the time they were watching the D-Day armada from Canford Cliffs they were indistinguishable from the toffs. "But I am desperately ashamed to say I did make excuses for friends not to come to see me at home in our two-up, one-down."

Forty years later, his second wife, the BBC radio reporter Sonia Beesley, did a Radio 4 programme on the Fleming Report, and the eight Fleming boys were reunited for the first time since 1948. All had, like Sir Derek, prospered (one is the diplomat Brian Rose) and become pillars of society. His traineeship for a life in the chair began with Mars at Slough, with its distinctive American management style.

"British industry in 1955 was very stratified: workers clocked in at eight, clerks at nine, directors at ten. Separate dining-rooms and all that. But at Mars, everyone wore the same white coats and started early, everyone knew what everyone else was paid, and when Mars hit another million turnover everyone got a pay rise. All very logical and defensible."

One day, Forrest Mars himself arrived (at 7.30 am) and at once told Hornby to get the swing door removed from his office. "He said, 'You have 600 people working out there. If they're upset about anything, I don't want them having to make appointments or come through swing doors, to see you. People say I'm anti-union. I'm not anti-union; I'm anti-management that makes a union necessary'."

But the long hours finished off his first marriage. "It wasn't good for wives and families." Hornby left his wife and children for Sonia, and started a new family. He was headhunted by Texas Instruments, which sent them to Antibes, then to New York, where Sonia covered Watergate for the *Today* programme. "We were living in Connecticut when the ice storm happened — as in the film. One Sunday afternoon of gentle warm rain, suddenly the temperature dropped 20 degrees in an hour. And ice started falling, and you heard this cracking, as trees fell, and we were cut off, and all the lah-di-dah residents of Fairfield County had to have the Salvation Army bring them soup." I am struck by the realisation that Sir Derek lost his father at 12, left his own family when Nick was 12, and that Nick's new novel, *About A Boy*, centres on Marcus, a 12-year-old boy with a single-parent mother. "But have you read the end? It really concludes that you can't rely too much on the nuclear family. Life is about networks and other relationships, not necessarily a tight-knit family." His ex-wife, he says, was marvellous: she would get up at dawn to drive to London from Maidenhead so that Nick could carry watching Arsenal, where his father had first taken him. Both children did well at their grammar schools. Nick went to Cambridge, Gill to Oxford. "But they were indivisible, they were so close. Although they went in quite opposite directions: Nick wavered between the Workers' Revolutionary Party and the Communist Party, while Gill's friends were all called Giles or Rupert or Clarissa." And Nick still mangles his vowels ("He always said, 'Allow, dad' ") while Gill — as Nick notes in *Fever Pitch* — "talks like the Duchess of Devonshire". Until he wrote *Fever Pitch*, Nick scraped by on the impoverished literary fringes. Sir Derek has watched in amusement as his children deal with their explosions of bestseller money. While Gill and Robert Harris took to rural splendour in an old rectory in Berkshire, Nick has remained opposite Arsenal, regarding the shires as alien territory. Robert drives a Jag and lives like a squire; Nick does not drive, and takes the Piccadilly Line. Do they ask his advice about investments? "Nick said to me, 'Well Dad, I just shove it all in the building society'." His second family is also flourishing: Jonathan in advertising, Victoria working for Romanian orphanages. Fatherhood has become grandfatherhood. Danny Hornby, Nick's autistic son, is "a lovely, good-natured child" although the strain of looking after him has caused Nick and his wife Virginia to live apart — only three doors apart, as they share his care and dine together every night.



In 1994 Sir Derek saw the London and Continental Railways consortium through 18 months of tense bidding. Their first catastrophic setback was the fire in the tunnel. "It was the first anniversary of the Eurostar train. Michael Heseltine was coming to cut the cake, when I had a phone call at 3am. We thought it inappropriate," he says, "to have cakes and champagne." The train was grounded from November to June, which put paid to any possibility of a flotation.

On the day of Prescott's threat ("I liked Prescott," he says. "Very straight, understood his brief, tough without being aggressive") Sir Derek was in a gloomy state. Press comment had been harsh. Could he face his evening engagement at a dinner in Gray's Inn? "But I went along — and nobody seemed to know anything about it: the High Court judge sitting next to me said, 'I'm told you're something to do with the railways. Can you do anything about my train from Guildford? It's 10 minutes late every day.' It was so refreshing, I realised then it was not the end of the world."

This week, when he will probably be replaced by John Neerhout, the American engineer whose skills saw the Channel Tunnel built in the first place, Sir Derek will be packing up his office, taking down the photographs of his racehorse winning at Ludlow, of Anthony Quayle (Sir Derek is chairman of Compass Theatre) and of the Midland Hotel at St Pancras, which when restored will be Britain's most splendid railway hotel. He is sad not to see that through: but he has two more plcs to chair, and besides, he is addicted to life at Badgers Farm in Warwickshire, to playing real tennis, and to cooking.

Today you might see Sir Derek in the butcher's in Shipston-on-Stour buying a leg of lamb, which he will cook with flageolets for the actor John Woodvine. It was his grandmother who taught him to cook. "When I tasted *blanquette de veau* in France for the first time, I realised that it was Granny Pardy's veal stew."

Book review: Metro, page 16

Littlewood satire still shows its deadly aim

THEATRE

Oh What A Lovely War

It is 35 years since Joan Littlewood had what her memoirs call "a mad idea". She wanted her Theatre Workshop to put on a play about the First World War. The cast would sing songs of the era and interpolate news clips — but would that be enough? "Stop," she suddenly said. "The war is a pierrot show. It's the right period and, after all, war is for clowns."

The show she and her actors improvised was a terrific success in 1963, but it has not had a major revival until now, leaving some of us to wonder if time, growing cynicism about authority and patriotism, Python-style humour and many other factors had combined to date it.

After all, to suggest that Haig was a Bible-thumping blimp from the Cleese-Chapman bestiary is a lot less shocking in 1998 than it would have been to an audience whose near relatives he had sent to their deaths. So has the National Theatre squandered its resources by dispatching Fiona Laird's energetic and versatile sub-company on tour in a big top that Littlewood, who dreamt of a Fun Palace for the people, would have loved?

After some hesitant moments in Milton Keynes, not wholly the result of having reached the tent via a glass and concrete townscape that appeared to have been neutron-bombed, I felt that, no, it hadn't. The jokey build-up to the outbreak of war is ponderous and, when it deals with international politics, inscrutable. A scene involving black-bearded spies in Sarajevo reminds you how slack and silly Littlewood could be. But when she starts putting her celebratory style to grim satiric purposes, and adds blunt historical facts, you cannot dismiss her as some over-the-hill subversive.

A hilarious scene, involving a sort of phallic drill conducted by an incomprehensible sergeant-major, turns serious with the yelling of "kill" and bayoneting. Frenchmen walk into battle baaing, just to demonstrate they are lambs going to the slaughter. Hymns are travestied — "Forward Joe Soap's army" — and chauvinist songs sung. Haig declares that trench warfare must win the war, since population differences mean that the Germans will end with 5,000 men and he with 10,000. An electric tape reports the results of the Somme: 1,332,000 men lost for a gain of nil.

Littlewood sometimes betrays her background in communist agitprop, for instance with a scene in which grouse-shooting capitalists conspire against an unprofitable peace. But when you hear our boys and the Germans exchanging carols and gifts across the trenches, or listen to the letters both sides sent home, you forget all that. What matters is the human waste and the military myopia, and *Lovely War* still leaves you lamenting both.

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Censure art, but don't censor it

Should we defend or deplore 'body art'? asks **Anthony Julius**

Suddenly bodies are *news*. Not whole bodies, but parts of them: limbs, torsos, heads. We are not concerned with a political scandal — the parts aren't moving ones. It's an art scandal. But its not about pornography, as we might expect from this subject matter.

A sculptor, Anthony-Noel Kelly, has been found guilty of stealing body parts from which he made casts before burying the remains. But when his silver-gilded sculptures were publicly exhibited they were brought to the attention of Her Majesty's Inspector of Anatomy, and then the police.

The body parts, obtained from the Royal College of Surgeons, had been there for some time. Neither their original nor their new owners had any use for them any more. The prosecutor insisted on the trial's opening day that the case was not about art, nor even about outraging public decency. It was just, he said, about theft. He was wrong. Theft was the least of it.

As a defendant, Mr Kelly was of little interest. It is only as an artist — or someone who claimed the privileges and status of the artist — that he is intriguing. And indeed, he insisted that he was an artist. He defended himself in a series of interviews, saying: "I have never made any money from this. This is about art." It is a different kind of defence from the one deployed in court: the uses to which the body parts are put is irrelevant to whether an offence has been committed.

> **There's a sense that this art preys upon the dead**

The case raised questions which the jury's verdict has not solved. To begin with, one might ask whether the Anatomy Act's discrimination in favour of medical research and against the use by artists of cadavers is justifiable. The Act recognises as legitimate a person's wish for his or her body to be used for anatomical examination. Yet if anyone, during his last illness and in the presence of two witnesses, expressed the wish that his body be left to Mr Kelly or any other artist, the Act would not permit it.

This seems objectionable for at least two reasons. First, why shouldn't a person be free — public health considerations allowing — to dispose of his own body as he wishes? If he chooses to perpetuate his existence as a work of art, then why not? Who would not prefer to gaze out at respectful gallery audiences than gaze up at gagging first-year medical students?

Secondly, the Anatomy Act's prejudice against art and in favour of science exhibits a disregard for the claims of art and artistic endeavour. The Act is philistine. It permits anatomical examinations only when undertaken in the course of teaching, studying, or researching into, morphology. If Leonardo da Vinci were alive and working in England today, he too might be at risk of prosecution under the Act, as might Michelangelo, Gericault, Holbein, or Caravaggio. All studied the limbs and musculature of the dead. Mr Kelly has even been compared to Leonardo, praised as "a serious medical artist of considerable talent".

The human body has been an object of artists' attention since murals decorated our first dwelling places. If we want art, rather than kitsch, we have to let artists take risks — with their subjects, as well as with our sensibilities.

Against these arguments, consider the following. Respect for the dead is a necessary piety: if we cannot respect the dead, what prospect is there for teaching respect for the living? The violence done to corpses is often an aspect of the horror of war. Atrocities of the kind depicted by Goya are deeply dismaying. They should not be regarded as providing opportunities for "shock art". They are degraded when they are treated merely as the means to some greater — though ultimately dubious — aesthetic end. Art of this kind calls into question its own credentials.

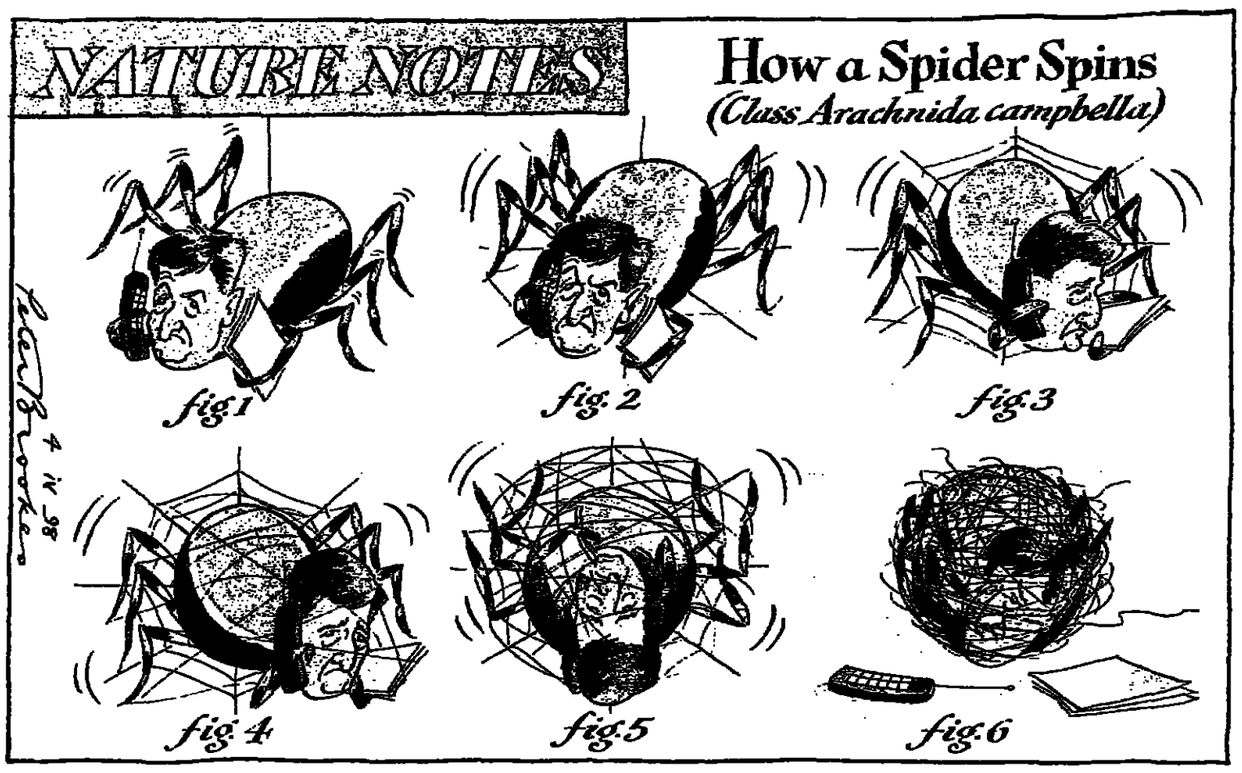
As in war, so in peace. And bodies should be left in peace. They should not become the playthings of artists (or anyone else).

This sense that the dead have rights which artists may not violate is a powerful one, perhaps amounting to a taboo. It cannot be lightly dismissed. This explains the widespread disgust generated by the Chapman brothers' three-dimensional version of Goya's *Great Deeds Against the Dead* which was shown in the Royal Academy's *Sensation* exhibition. And it explains the readiness of the jury to convict the Canadian artist who exhibited a sculpture of a mannequin's head wearing earrings of freeze-dried human foetuses. There is a sense that these art works violate their subjects, that they prey upon the dead, exploiting them in their passivity, their vulnerability.

But the trouble with arguments of this kind is that although they may begin quite reasonably with a defence of decency, they invariably end with a demand for the suppression of the offending art work, which is itself an indecency — as censorship almost always is.

So, one is left with a dilemma: regretting the existence of certain art works while resisting their suppression, endeavouring to censure without censoring. It's a tricky line to walk, so we should all be grateful to Mr Kelly for giving us the opportunity to stay in practice.

The author is a senior partner at Mishcon de Reya.



An elegy for England

If only we could go back to 1900 and save our glimmering landscape

Simon Jenkins

The BBC newsreader was specific. Disaster beckoned. When the nation's computers reached the end of December next year, they would treat the new year as if it were 1900 — not AD1000 or even AD 0, but 1900. The Prime Minister had declared a national emergency and, as is now the custom in our country, the corporation agreed.

Tony Blair thus stood alone against every DOS-prompt virus, every mouse failure, every hacker's revenge. He was Tony *coeur de lion*, marching to save Britain from the Armageddon of the nerds. Without him, jets would drop from the sky, kidney machines would default, *poulet a l'estragon* with sun-dried *tomato would emerge raw from the* oven. He pledged a new children's crusade in which 20,000 unemployed truants would become millennium bugbusters. Wearing Bless-you-Tony T-shirts, they would fan out from Downing Street, promising tearful grannies to fix their mainframes in an instant.

I took a different spin from the story. Was it conceivable that every computer could really "think it was 1900"? Could these titans of the post-Industrial Revolution truly reinstate the year of my dreams, with the added joy of computers in attendance? In that year, I have long believed, it was bliss to be alive. If 1900 is indeed millennium bug-land, I was ready to give it a try.

No century has been so monstrously oversold as the 20th. Britain under Queen Victoria was Europe's most successful polity since the early Roman Empire. In just 70 years it discovered and bequeathed to us a complete rail network, internal combustion engines, gas and electricity, wireless telegraphy, anaesthetics, public sanitation, mass education, worker protection, full employment, imperial security and democracy. Our century, in comparison, has been an innovatory pygmy. Apart from world wars, atom bombs, deforestation and Channel 5, its one life-enhancing invention has been the microchip computer. Yet it is precisely this invention that has apparently called a halt. We have so screwed up the past hundred years, it is saying, that we must start again. This is no virus. It is a message.

I have recently completed a journey round England. I travelled from the South Coast across to the West Country, then up through the Welsh Marches to Lancashire, across the northern Pennines and down the Great North Road to London. Even the most incorrigible chauvinist of the English landscape would find this a depressing experience. It would beggar the belief of a present-day Cobbett or Defoe. Whatever the 20th century had touched with its wand it has rendered drear, uniform and ugly. The only relief are those fragments of urban or rural scenery that are still recognisably pre-1900.

The England of a hundred years ago still distinguished town from country. The land was heavily populated, with people using roads and lanes to get to and from fields or other places of work. The shoreline, apart from ports and resorts, was virgin. Towns and cities boasted their presence with fine buildings in which all citizens took pride. Above all, from region to region, the texture of the landscape and its settlement reflected local geology and building types, local history, culture and voice.

This has almost all gone. Much was bound to disappear as farms depopulated and jobs sought new markets and needed new roads. But most of the degeneration results from a naive belief that the free-market tradition which created pre-1900 England would continue to protect the landscape that every Briton professes to hold dear. The problem, as Mark Twain said, is that they don't make country any more. It has vanished faster in the last quarter of the century than ever before (according to the Council for the Protection of Rural England). Land use planning under the Tories has been an unmitigated disaster, with urban areas left to rot and ministers ordering the colonisation of the countryside to "provide for new household formation". The totem of Thatcher's Britain will not be the Falklands war, nor privatisation. It will be the "Georgian" estate in a field, the out-of-town shopping centre and a swirl of congested roadscape.

The South Coast is now sprawling with pylons from Brighton almost to the mouth of the River Exe. A continuous carpet of bungalows and caravans is broken only by patches owned by the National Trust and the military. To the north, Bristol spreads towards Wales, Gloucester and Cheltenham are merging. The West Midlands is an uncontrolled cobweb of ribbon estates. The towns of the Pennine foothills have lost their visual drama amid glorious moorland. You can drive from Merseyside to Leeds with scarcely a field or moor to interrupt the estates. These places are said to be frantic for tourists. Wigan even has a museum devoted to Wigan 1900! Yet the towns have been gutted of their Georgian and Victorian architecture and housing has scarred the surrounding country.

Those responsible for guarding Britain's landscape have, I imagine, never seen it wholescale. Rules that once encouraged builders to use local materials and local styles — standard practice on the Continent — have been given up. The M1 corridor from South Yorkshire down past Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Northampton and Bedfordshire is an almost continuous vista of out-of-town homes and shopping centres, all fluttering crude sales pennants. Hundreds of thousands of Beazer and Barratt homes splurge outwards, wherever farmers have sold land. Design is standardised. We now have "nationalised" houses, petrol stations, road signs, fast-food outlets, hypermarkets, pylons. Settlement is no longer related to existing places of work or leisure. The collapse of planning means everyone must use a car. A dominant impression of my journey is that there is now hardly a road in England that in daylight hours is not a continuous stream of traffic. I refuse to accept this complaint as a nostalgic bourgeois fallacy. England in 1900 was certainly poorer and its cities polluted and overcrowded. But so are modern cities: most are awful places, depressing beyond words. Their redeeming areas are invariably pre-1900: Albert Dock in Liverpool, St Anne's Square and Castlefields in Manchester, the canal corridor in Leeds, the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham. Every inward investor and tourist cries the same, God save us from your 20th-century parts. Pre-1900 urban Britain could easily have been rendered attractive for modern living and working, forestalling the need of millions to flee to suburbs which are becoming as congested as were the towns. Go look at "modern" Luton, Leicester, Doncaster or Aylesbury.

In every poll of what makes the English most proud of their nation, love of countryside comes top. Yet British planning still treats countryside as a patch of scenic delight, as agriculture awaiting a building opportunity. The England of the north Midlands, Lancashire and the West Riding will soon be "country" only in the Pennines and the Peak District National Parks. As we urbanise the country, we do not "ruralise" deserted towns. There is no way to put a price on the collective love of landscape so as to resist encroachment. There can only be planning.

The few beacons in this wilderness are the more precious. Almost all are pre-1900: high streets of smaller towns and villages, country houses and estates, National Trust land, churches, hotels and pubs. These are not beloved only of middle-class tourists. They constitute a variety in our surroundings that is appreciated by all. They represent the lingering fragments of local identity supposedly crucial to the rebirth of community. They require protection through regulation, or we shall find we have lost en masse what we thought too trivial to save individually.

The one feature of localism that survives is the most unlikely. You may enter any standardised hotel, petrol station, chainstore or pub and you will have no clue where in Britain you are — until you hear a voice. Nothing should be so vulnerable to mobility as regional accent. Yet the burr of the West Country, the twang of the Midlands, the nasal whine of the North West, the swallowed Viking vowels of the Geordie, all survive. I must conclude that behind all these accents is that insistent computer bug, warning us of our 20th-century errors and demanding, on pain of catastrophe, that we "go back to 1900".

A lunatic algebra of love

Andrew Miller on the ravages of the modern relationship

First love should be legislated for, like free dental check-ups and milk at morning break. It is a kind of Eden: a morning of blissful surprise. No one has ever kissed so passionately at a bus stop, or stared so solemnly into another's eyes. Then fiercely, or with a distant hissing, it ends.

We imagine that the next time we can begin again from zero: but we have already exchanged Innocence for History. The moment we embark on our second affair a kind of lunatic algebra comes into play. Our latest amour is seven to the power of X times more complicated than the one before. From then on, we are in a state of permanent recovery, each new relationship a continuation of an earlier one by other means: the new passion rearing from the bones of the old. By 20 we are already racked by nostalgia. This is the sort of situation on which the dramatist Patrick Marber feeds in *Closer*, which opened this week in the West End. The play has been hailed as a *Private Lives* of the late 1990s.

Confronted by each other's pasts, affairs become a matter of large acceptances, a willingness to share the bed with a dozen ghosts on either side: old lovers, dead parents, abusive or beloved teachers. There is a comedy in this of course, an edgy farce, as we struggle to dislocate the mind's jaw and swallow the good with the bad: her charming shoplifting sprees, the rather harder to follow four-in-a-bed romp with her father's bridge partners.

If we could only learn to take each other at face value. Why do we need to know so much? The impulse is masochistic. Years ago I read a girlfriend's diary. It was a foolish and unpardonable thing to do (though why exactly do people leave their private diaries in full view?). All I learnt was that what she felt for me she had felt before for other men. Why should this be so shocking? But it was. To pursue relentlessly the subplots of a loved one's life is to poke about in a Bluebeard's cellar. Likewise, the compulsive need to confess, constantly to disinter our ghastly secrets, is a violence akin to flicking rubber-bands at someone's face.

But in the end do we acquire a taste for each other's baggage? After all, some people's baggage is the most interesting part of them. Their lack of innocence is precisely what seduces us. And there are those — it remains something of a male prerogative — who wear experience like an expensive coat, who flaunt the old used life in them. A man's face is apparently enhanced by wrinkles — where would Beckett or Auden have been without them? But women have creams with which they practise a kind of physical self-censorship, erasing the signs of their past.

It is tempting to conclude that what saves us — and keeps dramatists like Patrick Marber in work — is our capacity to be attracted to another person's damage. If so, then this is one of our more graceful perversions and not entirely pathological because it calls out of us our compassion. Like old campaigners we stand around and admire one another's wounds: the entry, the exit. And the story behind the scars does not matter, perhaps, as much as the scars themselves, those banners of our unlikely persistence, and proof, if proof were needed, not just of our vulnerability, but of how astonishingly tough we are.

Andrew Miller's second novel Casanova *will be published in September.*

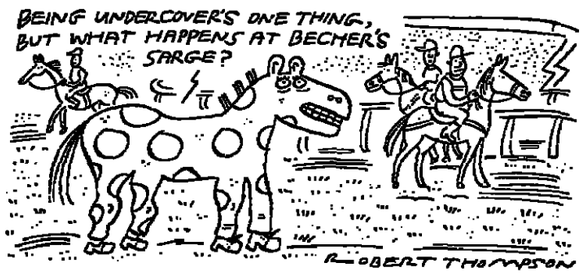
Editor's exit

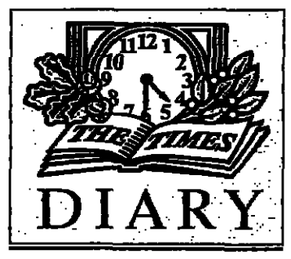
WHILE Ian Hargreaves settles down this weekend to life after the *New Statesman*, media types are pondering the reasons for his sudden departure from the magazine for the cerebral Left. He resigned as Editor on Thursday, citing Sir Norman Fowler-like personal reasons. But insiders speculate that the departure of Hargreaves (below left) is more likely to be linked to the *Statesman's* ownership. Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General (right), who is mired in allegations about his business interests and faces a Commons inquiry, bought the journal for about £500,000 in 1996 and appointed Hargreaves a month later.





The two seemed to be working well together until controversy erupted in late autumn about Robinson's offshore trusts and, last February, about his failure to declare directorships to the Commons. Unlike the rest of the media, the *New Statesman* remained reticent about the affair. Hargreaves's departure, I gather, was mainly a reflection of his frustration at being unable to cover the story. Robinson may also have had his own reasons for not enticing Hargreaves to stay: the editor was hired on a £100,000-plus salary, but *Statesman's* circulation had levelled at a puny 24,000. I cannot wait to read next week's edition.





JASPER GERARD

Nice try

HAS Llew Smith emerged as the most toadying MP in the Labour Party? After Tony Blair's diktat that ministers should politely decline free hospitality at this summer's World Cup, the member for Blaenau Gwent has gone one step further. Smith was invited by the Welsh Rugby Union to tomorrow's match between Wales and France. It all sounded very agreeable: lunch in the Wembley banqueting hall, VIP seats for the match and a post-match tea.

Not only did the Welsh MP decline the invitation, but he also imposed an extraordinary demand on his hosts. "I told the union that I had a number of unemployed constituents who would greatly enjoy this beanfeast," he tells me. "I also suggested it could throw in a few train tickets for them." Understandably, the union seems not to have been persuaded and has yet to respond to Smith's request.

● *LORD Mason of Barnsley, a delicate sort, has a complaint: passive perfume. The fragrant wafts from his female colleagues in the Lords are getting up his nose. The culprits? Baronesses Jay (pictured), Blackstone, Symons, Hollis and Hayman. "I am impressed with the ability of our frontbench team, especially with its fair sprinkling of ladies," says Mason, more of a son of toil than a parfumière. "But when three of our baronesses are together, those of us down wind feel we are living in a perfumery. Is passive perfume harmful?"*

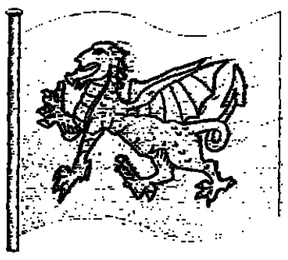


Target Archer

ONE man is happy to see Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare gearing up for the London mayoralty. Michael Crick's pacy biography of Archer, *Stranger Than Fiction*, is flying off the shelves as political rivals and journalists ready themselves for the campaign. The text has unrelenting details of Archer's colourful career and his "talent for inaccurate precis".

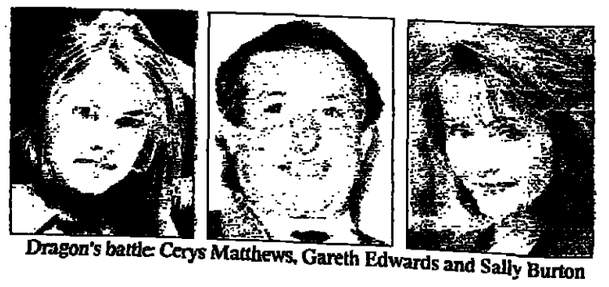
"I'm glad to hear it," says Crick, when told about the book's renewed success. "There are a few things he has to clear up. I would particularly like him to explain what he was doing in the 1960s telling people that he got a degree from an American University when he was on a body-building course." Worse news follows: Crick will stalk him with a *Newsnight* film crew during the campaign.

● *WATCH out, Barry Norman. James Cameron, the Oscar-winning director of* Titanic, *has film critics in his sights. After a disparaging notice in the* Los Angeles Times *he wrote to Kenneth Turan, the reviewer, to accuse him of "simmering in his own bile" after he called the film "the lowest common denominator". Cameron added: "It must be a great burden to be cursed with such clear vision when your misguided flock brayed past you, like lemmings, unmindful."*



Davies delivers his call to arms

WELCOME to Cool Cymru. Ron Davies, the Welsh Secretary, who has serious ambitions to rule the Principality, wants to drop its flag and create a new symbol for the nation. Secretly, he has asked the College of Arms to come up with a fresh design, which will be displayed for the first time when the coat of arms of the new national assembly will be unveiled. "We will get rid of the stereotypical images," says Peter Hain, the Welsh Minister. "Modern Wales is about Manic Street Preachers and Catatonia rather women in shawls and rain-sodden valleys." Peter Llewellyn Gwynn-Jones, the college's Garter Principal King of Arms, has so far suggested redrawing the Welsh dragon, adding some "go faster stripes". Support came from Sally Burton, widow of Richard, who believes her late husband would have approved: "The Prince of Wales is rebranding himself so why shouldn't we?" But Cerys Matthews, lead singer with Catatonia, the Newport popular music group, is unimpressed: "They will put a spliff in its mouth. I don't believe in wasting money on a superficial veneer." Gareth Edwards, the Cardiff rugby legend, was also far from enthusiastic. He made a plea for the Welsh team's red shirts to retain the "Prince of Wales feathers". But Davies looks unlikely to be easily dissuaded — he wants to become "Rouge Dragon Pursuivant", an office created by Henry VII to guard the Welsh coat of arms.



Dragon's battle: Cerys Matthews, Gareth Edwards and Sally Burton

WORKING IT OUT

The New Deal must be more flexible to succeed

On Monday the Government will launch its "New Deal" nationally. From next week, all 18 to 24-year-olds unemployed for six months or more will be offered a range of options, all aimed at enhancing their employability. These include a subsidised place in the workforce, a position in the voluntary sector, participation in an environment task force, further education and self-employment. Those who refuse will have their unemployment benefit slashed. Another wage subsidy is available for the older unemployed. Through this vast £3 billion scheme, the Government hopes to tackle a range of social and economic ills.

The ambition is admirable. Although the last Government also pioneered ideas with similar aims, the New Deal is on a different scale. It is not solely a short-term drive to reduce unemployment numbers but a long-term effort to increase the flexibility and raise the quality of Britain's labour force. The companies that have agreed to take part should be applauded. There is a real chance, though, that the New Deal will fall short of its targets. If the Government is to make the most of its initiative, it must embrace the flexibility that it has urged upon others.

When Gordon Brown first adopted the New Deal in October 1995, there were 250,000 young people who had been unemployed for six months or longer. But by the beginning of this year there were 118,000, the lowest such number for two decades. Of these, surveys suggest, 80 per cent will find employment without any extra assistance. The remainder represent a difficult hard core, often with criminal records. In contrast, there are still 220,000 older people who have been without work for two years or more. Their prospects of re-employment are modest. Yet New Deal funding offers the young unemployed ten times more support per person than their older compatriots. The Government seems to be fighting the wrong battle. It needs to rethink the balance.

It is also not clear that it is operating in the right territory. Although the New Deal has been deliberately designed as a national plan, unemployment is at present an extremely localised problem. Different areas have very distinct needs. In some blackspots, a wage subsidy somewhat higher than the proposed £60 per week would be needed to entice employers. In other places, subsidies are irrelevant because low educational attainment is the issue. Ideally, as Sir Hugh Sykes has argued in a pamphlet for *Politeia*, the Government should decentralise the New Deal if it wants it to be effective.

It must also be careful about the training component. There is a danger that the New Deal will demand an inappropriately rigid element that will do little for the employment prospects of those put through it. The evidence suggests that companies want workers who are trainable rather than trained. They would rather fashion specific skills themselves. Unfortunately, the failures of the state education system, which the Prime Minister has pledged to tackle, often mean that business is presented with the functionally illiterate. The Government needs to have more faith in the private sector's ability to provide resources to meet their needs. Otherwise there is the chance that Britain will have a large pool of slightly more skilled but equally unemployed individuals.

None of this should be impossible to incorporate within the New Deal. In the light of fresh circumstances Mr Brown might adopt some ideas to be put forward next week by David Willetts for the Social Market Foundation. Age categories should be eliminated. Instead, the Government should seek to help all 400,000 adults who have been unemployed for a year or longer. They have a striking regional concentration. It should focus on practical means of placing them in the labour market. If the New Deal is to bring lasting new opportunities, a retuning of policy is evidently needed.

A THEFT OF HISTORY

Guatemala needs help to save its Mayan treasures

Hidden for centuries beneath the dense jungle canopy of Guatemala's vast north-eastern province of El Petén lie hundreds of cities and religious centres of the great Mayan civilisation which, at its Pre-Columbian peak, numbered around two million people in an area covering much of Central America. The towering pyramids of Tikal are famous as one of the great wonders of Mayan architecture and are a magnet for the tourism that Guatemala is anxious to cultivate in the wake of its terrible 36-year civil war. But hundreds of other major sites are only gradually being excavated, and most of those that have been uncovered enjoy little protection other than their difficulty of access in this sparsely populated region. Guatemala is too poor to mount guards round the clock at more than 100 of the 2,200 known sites in El Petén.

Increasingly, the archaeologists are finding that looters have preceded them; and the greatest treasures of the already excavated sites are being plundered by armed robbers. Smuggling of Mayan pottery and sculpture is not new, but it has recently assumed industrial dimensions. Since the country became an important trans-shipment point for the Colombian drugs trade, drug barons have built airstrips in the jungle; and art theft has become a highly profitable sideline from which no site, however remote, is now safe. Guatemala is being systematically plundered of its history by marauding gangs certain of ready markets in the West.

Prime targets are the supremely beautiful stone tablets, or stelae, carved with figures of Mayan kings, priests and nobles or the records of great battles. They are not only stolen, but destroyed; looters cut the bas-reliefs from the thick slabs, often breaking up the intricate carving for later reassembly. As we report on page 11, the Guatemalan Government has now decided to remove these stelae from their ancestral locations, replacing them with unsaleable replicas.

It is the right decision. Mexico has already shown, at Monte Albán, that this can be done so sensitively and skilfully that it does not diminish the aesthetic impact of sites. But it is expensive, even more so if, which is the ideal solution, the originals are housed in adjacent purpose-built museums. The Guatemalan pilot project includes only two centres, Ceibal and Dos Pilas, whose stelae are particularly fine. The Government's search for private co-sponsorship deserves to succeed, but cannot be the whole answer in what is evidently a race against time.

A vital part of any rescue plan must be to find ways to make tourism, and the surveillance of sites and conservation of the protective forest canopy which are indispensable to its future, economically attractive to the region's impoverished, land-hungry peasants. Since tourism will only gradually yield sufficient profits to make this effort self-financing, the international consortiums now rapidly moving into the country's hotel industry would be wise to see conservation as an integral part of their investment.

Foreign governments can and should help by curbing the demand that feeds the trade. Since 1991, the US has banned the import and sale of Mayan art; European countries such as Belgium, which is a prime destination, should follow suit. Guatemala, in turn, should rethink its total ban on trade in antiquities. Where a country is rich both in artefacts and in smugglers, the best can be the enemy of the good. Limited state sales of lesser treasures, with the profits going to conservation, might be wiser. Mayan history remains one of the least well charted of the world's great civilisations. The case for concerted action could hardly be stronger.

DUMBED-DOWN BURKE

That sinking feeling when the video rolls

One of the perils of attending any international conference in rebranded Britain is the inevitable government video. Be they Commonwealth heads of government, European Union Prime Ministers, Asian Presidents or even the Queen herself, the hapless dignitaries trapped on the podium will all experience that sinking feeling that accompanies the ten most depressing words in English today: "We are now going to show you a short video."

The formula is as hackneyed as Cool Britannia. First comes a musical flourish, a volley of trumpets to suggest Merrie Olde England, and some sweeping aerial shots of our green and pleasant land, zooming in to romping children or nodding pensioners. Then, with just a touch of class, the narrator — an actor such as Jeremy Irons successfully merchandised abroad by BBC Enterprises — launches into his committee-written script: the young country of Europe . . . a new spirit abroad . . . together we can face the challenge of the future . . . new Labour, new millennium. The trumpets fall silent, the camera glowers, a sombre note creeps in. Yes, there are still difficulties; yes, this Government is not afraid to make hard choices; but yes, there is one man who has a vision for the future. The music swells again. A catch of emotion just brushes the narrator's voice. The video stops and the lights go up. On cue, smiling and confident, the Prime Minister takes his place at the lectern to start his speech. Leni Riefenstahl would have been delighted.

The Queen had the grace last October to crack a joke at the montage of film clips that chronicled a royal year: "My goodness, I have been busy." But self-deprecation is no longer fashionable. The video that launched a thousand clichés at the Asia-Europe summit yesterday bored on to the end, with only shots of Robin Cook for light relief.

The long-suffering spouses, denied their coveted shopping spree and dragged around hospitals and good works, might quietly relish their husbands' having to sit through pictures of smiling classrooms which they themselves were obliged to visit. But videos are a substitute for reality, a chance to catch up on sights unseen, programmes missed or company chairmen absent from the annual general meeting. They are hardly a substitute for a planned agenda, or a dumbed-down version of Burkean oratory.

The new political breed thinks otherwise. From the election campaign bus to the exhortatory gathering of the party faithful, no meeting where two or three are gathered together is complete without the taped message. The video is the unhip face of today's hip politics. Asia... meet today's Britannia — magnetic, animated and cool.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Silence of the Labs on back benches

From Professor Harry Gelber

Sir, Libby Purves's heart is obviously in the right place ("Silence of the Babes", March 31) but her view of the role of Parliament is sadly old-fashioned. Rarely is any MP now elected in his or her own right. What sway elections are parties, party leaders and generalised public impressions (which are often quite right).

Backbench MPs exist to rally local support for the Government, sometimes to act as "friends at court" for their constituents and, most importantly, to provide a basis for government and a pool of potential ministers.

The connection between government and public acceptance is established and maintained principally through continuous opinion polling and focus groups, supplemented by balancing among interest groups; that between Parliament and the details of public administration is virtually non-existent. No wonder the PM does not waste much of his time in the House.

All this is strongly promoted, not only by a certain healthy public boredom with politics, but by the professionalisation of politics and the way in which the media and others are liable to condemn all outside activities, especially those with financial implications, as likely to involve "conflicts of interest". The result is to make individual backbenchers dependent on the good graces of their party machine, even for the bread in the mouths of their children.

And these are the people whom Libby Purves wants to "make trouble".

Yours sincerely,
HARRY GELBER,
19 Balmain Close, Ealing, W5 5BY.
March 31.

From Dr Phyllis Starkey, MP for Milton Keynes South West (Labour)

Sir, Libby Purves's criticism of backbenchers for their apparent lack of activity seems to be based on the view that only MPs who criticise the Government in public are influencing Labour's policies. That is not the case.

Ministers in this Government, led by the example of the Prime Minister, have made time to meet with groups of Labour backbenchers to discuss policies and to listen to the suggestions of MPs. Backbench committees shadow each department and have ample opportunity to feed back to ministers their knowledge of how policies are operating on the ground and their ideas of how policy should develop.

Labour MPs are far from silent: I guess the problem for the media is that constructive debate does not make for good copy.

Yours sincerely,
PHYLLIS STARKEY,
House of Commons.
March 31.

Late-night sittings

From Mr Michael Ryle

Sir, You express concern about late-night sittings in the House of Commons (leading article, "I spy sleepers", March 28); yet carefully considered remedies for this malady are immediately at hand, but are not being applied.

The Modernisation Select Committee, set up by the Government and chaired by the Leader of the House, agreed last July (report, July 30) to a unanimous report, *The Legislative Process*, which was adopted by the House without division. This report put forward radical proposals, to be applied during a trial period, for improving the ways Bills are considered in the Commons. In particular, it proposed systematic programming of legislation which would almost eliminate the need for late-night sittings.

There is broad agreement on what needs to be done, and the lack of action is very worrying. If the House wishes to avoid the problems to which you have drawn attention, essential changes in the legislative processes should be delayed no longer.

Yours,
MICHAEL RYLE
(Clerk of Committees,
House of Commons, 1987-89),
Jasmine Cottage,
Winsford, Minehead TA24 7JE.
mbryle@ndirect.co.uk
April 2.

Commons traditions

From Mr Peter Moss

Sir, Sir Carol Mather's letter of April 2 (see also letter, March 31) raises more questions than it answers.

Why is a busy government whip also a Vice-Chamberlain of the Queen's Household? Why does he go to Buckingham Palace on one of the busiest days of the parliamentary year? What is the "very useful purpose" that he serves while he is there? And why don't they give him a bottle of gin?

Yours faithfully,
PETER MOSS,
24 Quaggy Walk,
Blackheath, SE3 9EJ.
p.moss@binternet.com
April 2.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

All out of tune over Abbey organist

From the Right Reverend John V. Taylor

Sir, As a colleague of Dr Martin Neary throughout most of his tenure as organist and master of the music at Winchester Cathedral (1972-87), I write in bewildered disbelief at the news of his suspension from his post at Westminster Abbey (letters, April 1) and to testify to his absolute integrity, his loyalty to his team and the essentially spiritual motivation of his work.

Dr Neary was unquestionably and properly the initiating mind behind the cathedral's programme of public concerts, the choir's foreign tours and Winchester's share in the annual Southern Cathedrals Festival, meticulously submitting his plans for consultation and corporate approval. Never was there any breath of impropriety. These activities, in which Mrs Neary took a recognised and valued share, fulfilled a valuable ambassadorial function for the cathedral; yet they were clearly secondary to Dr Neary's concern for the daily routine of choral services.

I await developments at Westminster with acute anxiety, hoping that the Abbey and the Church in England will not lose the inspiration of a most dedicated musician through some incomprehensible misjudgment.

Yours etc,
†JOHN V. TAYLOR
(Bishop of Winchester, 1975-85),
65 Aston Street,
Oxford OX4 1EW.
April 1.

From Mr Simon Preston

Sir, Richard Morrison writes ("Choirmaster who works with the best that money can attract", March 31) that I left Westminster Abbey after six years because I "found the atmosphere intolerably stifling". In fact it was rather that I had come to realise that lay appointments at Westminster Abbey, in contrast to my previous appointment at Christ Church, Oxford, tend to be regarded differently from clerical ones.

In this respect, therefore, I wonder if the two letters you publish today from parents of choristers at the Abbey are really helpful to the understanding of this matter. Surely the Dean and Chapter are entitled to hold a disciplinary hearing if they suspect wrongdoing, however apparently trivial, and the procedures for this are quite clearly laid down.

What is needed in this case is not the attendant glare of publicity — which to their credit the Dean and Chapter have not promoted — but a little humility on both sides. An admission of or apology for any apparent misdemeanour, if such exists, would go a long way to producing the Christian forgiveness necessary for the resolution of this unfortunate matter.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON PRESTON
(Organist and Master of the Choristers, Westminster Abbey, 1981-87),
Little Hardwick,
Langton Green, Kent TN3 0EY.
April 1.

From Mrs S. A. R. Whitham

Sir, The extraordinary manner in which Westminster Abbey appears to be behaving is an all too familiar story.

As a teacher and as a musician, I believe that, no matter how talented an employee, how long his record of dedicated and exemplary service, how great the evidence of his competence, there will always be the management which seeks to assert itself, at whatever cost.

What can the Abbey gain by this behaviour? Nothing. Dr Neary should take whatever steps are required to clear his name, then resign, and betake himself elsewhere, to work his magic in some place where his talents are appreciated. Philistines are not only found among the laity.

Yours sincerely,
S. A. R. WHITHAM,
17 Park Grove,
Macclesfield SK11 8AS.
April 1.

Clinton in Africa

From the Editor of Marketfinder International

Sir, On the one hand you alert your readers to the worrying prospect of some African countries "slipping towards Fourth World status" (leading article, "Clinton in Africa", March 25). On the other, Sam Kiley, your Africa Correspondent, suggests that even faced with that prospect, "Western wellwishers can do little more than sit back, watch and hope" (report, March 26).

When African leaders use such dubious slogans as "African solutions to African problems" or "indigenous democracy" or "guided deregulation" I believe that it is to reinforce their dominance over their people and to deny them political as well as economic rights and freedoms. Yet the political and economic policies — democracy, human rights, low deficits, low inflation and, in general, good governance — that Africa needs to achieve a turnaround are universal in nature. To suggest otherwise is to give an undeserved badge of honour to those who through misguided policies have mismanaged Africa for more than two decades.

It may well be true, as Sam Kiley suggests, that "so far Western solutions have been a fiasco", but that is no reason at all to give up on Africa or to abandon the search for workable initiatives to help the continent. Which is why the current American effort to help Africa increase its share of world trade is commendable.

Taken further, the initiative should include helping those countries with relative stability and good governments to diversify their economies, so as to strengthen their export base, and thus their capacity to trade with the rest of the world.

Yours faithfully,
OLU FASAN,
Editor, *Marketfinder International*,
272 Queens Road, SE14 5JN.
March 26.

Roadside daffodils

From Mrs J. E. Buchanan

Sir, Alas, the "creeping suburbanisation" of daffodils on roadside verges, so much deplored by Mr David Pearman (letter, March 27; see also letters, March 28, April 1) has arrived in this village and many others.

The roughly-mown verges no longer contain cow parsley, campion, dandelion, etc, but are closely mown, edged and planted with, among other things, wallflowers, lobelia, roses and something that looks rather like a cactus. The lampposts are decorated with hanging baskets.

Money and time could be saved if we could return to the perfect simplicity of grass and wild flowers.

Perhaps some of the blame for this municipal look lies with the judges of "the most beautiful village" competitions. Prizes seem to me to be awarded to villages with the most bedding plants.

Yours sincerely,
FIONA BUCHANAN,
Woodhall Cottage,
Pencaitland,
East Lothian EH34 5DH.
April 2.

CPS in a spin

From Mr Rodney Warren

Sir, The letter (April 2) from Lyn Salisbury, the Crown Prosecution Service's Head of Communications, appears to confirm Frances Gibb's original report (March 31), namely the use by CPS mandarins of public funds to put their own gloss on the Glidewell report, even if it is, at this stage, said to be for the enlightenment of the CPS staff.

Surely the report must be allowed to speak for itself and from it we might see whether the service is "an organisation which cares about its people".

Mrs Salisbury appears to have started the "spin" already.

Yours faithfully,
RODNEY WARREN
(President, Eastbourne Law Society),
Rodney Warren & Co (solicitors),
45 Gildredge Road,
Eastbourne, Sussex BN21 4RY.
April 2.

Jewish compensation

From Mr Terence O'Brien

Sir, There is certainly an argument for giving back to those who are Jewish the funds which they or their families sent out of their countries for safeguarding before the war, but that argument cannot be, as Simon Weisenthal (letter, March 30) states, the same as that which applied to the Swiss Government.

The Swiss remained neutral, profited vastly in the war and finished up with their bank vaults crammed with foreign treasure. Britain went to war against Germany; it gave not only its foreign currency but, more nobly still, hundreds of thousands of British lives, in its six-year fight.

Some might think that stand, that sacrifice, merited respect; as indeed does the Government's decision (report, April 3) to apologise to and compensate the victims of the Nazis who lost assets held in British banks during the Second World War.

Yours truly,
TERENCE O'BRIEN,
Innisfree, Seal Square, Selsey,
Chichester, Sussex PO20 0HP.
April 3.

From Mr John O'Donnell

Sir, As a criminal practitioner for over 20 years, married to a Crown prosecutor and with many CPS friends, I can assure Lyn Salisbury that the need to use PR consultants to "get the facts" to CPS staff is seen as the height of condescension. They are perfectly capable of reading the Glidewell report for themselves.

That the DPP considers spending thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money on this exercise to be "good management" speaks more eloquently of what is wrong with CPS management than anything Glidewell is likely to say.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN O'DONNELL,
O'Donnells (solicitors),
68 Glovers Court,
Preston, Lancashire PR1 3LS.
April 3.

Weekend Money letters, page 6!

Too long at sea for today's Navy

From Mr C. J. A. Cope

Sir, *HMS Invincible*, one of our two operational aircraft carriers, returned to Portsmouth recently (report, March 27) having been at sea for seven months. Had it not been for the Gulf crisis she would have returned before Christmas.

On April 8, the frigate *HMS Brave* returns from the South Atlantic. She sailed from Plymouth last September. On April 9, the destroyer *HMS Nottingham* is due back in the UK after seven months in the Gulf.

Of course, anyone joining the Armed Forces, particularly the Navy, must accept that they will be compelled to spend substantial periods away from home. Nevertheless, an absence of seven months seems excessive and must be putting enormous and unnecessary strain on countless marriages and relationships, let alone the effect this must be having on children.

The truth of the matter is that whereas the Navy has lost far too many frontline ships in recent years, its commitments have not diminished. In fact, they have increased.

Although the Strategic Defence Review might reduce one or two naval commitments, recent leaks also suggest that the Navy could lose between two and six frigates (report, March 23). But what has been made abundantly clear is that there will be no increase in defence spending.

With deployments becoming more frequent and absences from home exceeding six months, the likely consequence will be large numbers of experienced and expensively trained personnel leaving the Navy.

Yours faithfully,
C. J. A. COPE,
(Contributor, *Warship World*),
35 Park Street,
Thame, Oxfordshire OX9 3HR.
April 2.

Reserve forces cuts

From Captain N. R. Hodgson, RN, Director of Naval Reserves

Sir, Commander N. R. Messinger (letter, March 24) seems to be living in the past.

In the last few years the RNR has been slimmed down, as indeed has the Royal Navy — by 30 per cent since 1990. (Coincidentally the number of RN admirals has reduced by 40 per cent.)

Totally restructured in 1994, the RNR is slowly expanding and its volunteer reservists are now directly focused upon the Royal Navy's requirements. Training regimes, under the auspices of the RN training establishments, afford individual reservists specifically designed courses and learning packages.

Some 5 per cent of the trained strength of the RNR have contracted for between three months and two years to serve full time alongside their regular counterparts at sea and ashore. On average an equivalent number are conducting training, within their annual allowance, to acquire or refresh requisite professional competencies. Some are deployed to Bosnia and the Gulf.

The new RNR is no longer detached and somewhat remote from the RN: the reservist is recruited, trained and working as an integrated member of the wider naval service, and valued by the Royal Navy accordingly.

Yours sincerely,
NORMAN HODGSON,
Victory Building,
HM Naval Base,
Portsmouth PO1 3LS.
March 26.

Sage words

From the Reverend H. R. M. Harries

Sir, Timely advice from my mother to my sisters:
Fear God, and do right.
Fear men, and don't write!

Yours faithfully,
RAYNER HARRIES,
44 Onslow Gardens,
Chipping Ongar, Essex CM5 9BQ.
April 3.

Cut-off point

From Mr Bruce Parker

Sir, *Coup de gras* is certainly a French lawnmower (letter, March 30), much in the same way that *aperitif* is a set of French dentures.

Yours faithfully,
BRUCE PARKER,
58 Canon Street,
Winchester, Hampshire SO23 9JW.

From Mr K. H. Larkman

Sir, My father taught me (some fifty years ago) that a *pas de deux* is a father of twins and that if you had *mal de mer* you were sick of mother. His *pièce de resistance* (otherwise defined as a young lady who fought off unwelcome advances) was the definition of a dumb blonde: one who thinks that a metronome is a little man who lives on the Paris Underground.

Is it the English levity with their language that prompts the French to try and ban the use of English phrases? Or is it just a lack of appreciation of the wonderful versatility of the pun?

Yours truly,
K. H. LARKMAN,
Campion's,
Wissington, Colchester CO6 4NL.
March 30.

COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE
April 3: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this evening held a Summit Dinner at Buckingham Palace for Heads of State and delegates attending the Second Asia-Europe Meeting at which The Duke of York, The Princess Royal, accompanied by Captain Timothy Laurence RN, and The Duke of Kent were present.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, this afternoon gave a Lunch at Buckingham Palace for the International Board of Directors of the Outward Bound Trust.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 3: The Duke of York, Trustee, this afternoon attended a Lunch at Buckingham Palace for the International Board of Directors of the Outward Bound Trust.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
April 3: The Princess Royal this morning visited Church House Centre, Flowergate, Whitby, and was received by Mr Anthony Wharton (Deputy Lieutenant of North Yorkshire).

Her Royal Highness, President, later visited the Save the Children Fund shop, 31 Flowergate, Whitby.

The Princess Royal, President, Riding for the Disabled Association, this afternoon visited Priory View Group's new school at Mill Holme Field Farm, Speeton, Filey, and was received by Major General Murray Naylor (Deputy Lieutenant of North Yorkshire).

KENSINGTON PALACE
April 3: The Duke of Gloucester this morning called upon the Prime Minister of Tunisia (Dr Hamed Karoui).

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester this afternoon arrived at Heathrow Airport, London.

Mrs Euan McCorquodale and Major Nicholas Barne were in attendance.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 3: The Duke of Kent, Vice Chairman, the British Overseas Trade Board, this morning visited Powerhouse United Kingdom Exhibition, Horse Guards, London SW1.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
April 3: Princess Alexandra this afternoon visited the Alexandra Unit, Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, Bankend Road, Dumfries, and was received by Sir David Landale (Deputy Lieutenant of Dumfriesshire).

Her Royal Highness this evening attended a Concert in aid of the Leonard Cheshire Foundation in South West Scotland at Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal will attend the Grand National and open the new Aintree Stand at Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool, at 12.15.

The Duchess of Gloucester, as Patron, Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, will attend the 21st annual national conference at the Commonwealth Institute, London W8, at 9.20am.

University news

Baroness Rawlings is to be the new Chairman of the Council of King's College London from July 31.

Framework Knitters

The following have been installed officers of the Company of Framework Knitters for the ensuing year:

Master, Mr David John Goodenday;

Upper Warden, Mr Michael David Patterson Turnbull;

Under Warden, Mr Jonathan McAvoy Dean.

At a dinner held after the installation at Ironmongers' Hall, the Master presented the 1997/98 Willey & Pearson award to Miss Claire-Yvette Munsey and the 1997/98 Rouse award to Miss Helen Louise Jones.



ALAN WELLER

Charlotte Harrison and Edward Miles-Kingston, of Chelsea, who have recently announced their engagement

Service dinners

Royal Engineers (Transportation)
General Sir John Stibbon, Chief Royal Engineer, was the guest of honour at a reunion dinner of the Royal Engineers (Transportation) Officers' Dinner Club held last night at Brompton Barracks, Chatham, after he had opened the new Transportation Display Room in the RE Museum. Lieutenant-Colonel G.J. Athey presided.

Ulster Defence Regiment
The Chief of Staff Headquarters Northern Ireland was the principal guest at the annual dinner of the Ulster Defence Regiment Officers' Dining Club held last night at Palace Barracks, Holywood. Colonel Sir Dennis Faulkner, president, received the guests.

Brighton College

Dr Anthony Seldon, Headmaster, invites all Old Brightonians and former staff to a series of reunions in the summer term. Please contact the OBA Office (tel 01273 704250) if you are not already on our mailing list.

Weekend anniversaries

TODAY

BIRTHS: Grinling Gibbons, wood carver, Rotterdam, 1648; Sir William Siemens, inventor, Lenthe, Germany, 1823; Rémy de Gourmont, writer, Bazoches-en-Houlmes, France, 1858; Maurice Vlaminck, painter, Paris, 1876.

DEATHS: Robert III, King of Scotland 1390-1406, Dundonald Castle, Rothesay, 1406; John Napier, inventor of logarithms, Merchiston Castle, Edinburgh, 1617; Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, military leader, The Hague, 1625; Oliver Goldsmith, playwright, novelist and poet, London, 1774; William Henry Harrison, 9th American President March 4-April 4, 1841, Washington, 1841; Sir William Crookes, physicist, discoverer of thallium, London, 1919; Karl Benz, pioneer of the motor car, Paris, 1929; André Michelin, motor tyre manufacturer, Paris, 1941; Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan 1971-77 executed, Rawalpindi, 1979; Gloria Swanson, actress, New York, 1983.

Francis Drake was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I on board *The Golden Hind* on his return from circumnavigating the world, 1581.

Gold was discovered in the Yukon, 1896.

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington by 11 nations, 1949.

Martin Luther King, Nobel Peace laureate 1964, was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, 1968.

TOMORROW

BIRTHS: Thomas Hobbes, philosopher, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, 1588; Sir Henry Havelock, general, relieved Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny, Sunderland, 1795; Joseph Lister, Baron Lister, surgeon and founder of antiseptic medicine, Upton, Essex, 1827; Algernon Swinburne, poet and critic, London, 1837; Spencer Tracy, actor, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1900; Herbert von Karajan, conductor, Salzburg, 1908.

DEATHS: William Brouncker, 2nd Viscount Brouncker, mathematician, first President of the Royal Society 1662-77, London, 1684; Georges-Jacques Danton, French Revolution leader, executed, Paris, 1794; Robert Raikes, pioneer of Sunday schools, Gloucester, 1811; George Edward Herbert, 5th Earl of Carnarvon, archaeologist, Cairo, 1923; Douglas MacArthur, American army general, Washington, 1964; Chiang Kai-shek, head of the National Government in China 1928-49, Taiwan, 1975; Howard Hughes, manufacturer, aviator and film producer, on flight to Houston, Texas, 1976; Sir Arthur Harris, Marshal of the RAF, Goring, Oxfordshire, 1984.

Johann Strauss's opera *Die Fledermaus* was first performed in Vienna, 1874.

The trial of Oscar Wilde began at the Old Bailey for offences arising from his friendship with Lord Alfred Douglas, 1895.

Winston Churchill resigned as Prime Minister, 1955.

The British Task Force sailed from Southampton for the Falkland Islands after the invasion by Argentina, 1982.

Armourers and Brasiers

Mr Paul Boon, St Edmund Hall, Oxford, and Mr Jean-Paul Barnes, St Anne's College, Oxford, have been awarded Armourers and Brasiers' Bursaries for Materials Science with a modern language at Oxford University.

Memorial service

Lady Ricketts
A service of thanksgiving for Lady Ricketts, Chairman of the National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, 1979-1984, was held yesterday at Holy Trinity, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire. Canon Michael Irving officiated. His Honour Peter Mason, QC, son-in-law, and Mrs Isobel Appiah-Endresen, niece, read the lessons. Mr Tristram Ricketts, son, read *Sea Fever* by John Masefield, Mr John Ricketts, son, read *Beauty* by John Masefield, Mrs Tessa Bird, daughter, read her mother's *Early March Brimstone* and Mrs Sara Mason, daughter, read her own work *Reflections*. Ms Elizabeth Filkin gave an address.

Latest wills

The **9th Earl of Dartmouth**, of Chipperfield, King's Langley, Hertfordshire, left estate valued at £8,588,345 net.

Sir Reginald **Murley**, President, Royal College of Surgeons 1977-80, of Radlett, Hertfordshire, left estate valued at £977,086 net.

Enid Maude Gurney **Boucher**, of Milstead, Sittingbourne, Kent, left estate valued at £948,770 net.

John Lantaff **Brown**, of Romsley, Halesowen, West Midlands, left estate valued at £1,003,636 net.

Malcolm Macadam **Copeman**, of Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £1,866,227 net.

Appointments in the Forces

Royal Air Force
AIR COMMODORE: J D Kennedy - RAF Cranwell, 9.4.98.
GROUP CAPTAIN: N J Buckley - SHAPE, 10.4.98.
WING COMMANDER: I M Draper - RAF Northolt, 23.3.98.
Retirement
GROUP CAPTAIN: G R Bush, 7.4.98.

Appointments

The Rev Professor Michael Banner, Professor of Moral and Social Theology, King's College London, has been appointed chairman of the Home Office Animal Procedures Committee.

Dr David Clark, head of Unilever's environmental safety laboratory, Dr Maggy Jennings, head of the research animals department of the RSPCA, Dr Gill Langley, scientific adviser to the Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research, and Professor John Martin, Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at University College London, to be members of the committee.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr E.W.R. Comins and Miss C.H. Allen
The engagement is announced between Edward William Reginald, younger son of Mr and Mrs Peter Comins, of Wiveton, Norfolk, and Claire Harriet, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Allen, of Keymer, West Sussex.

Mr P.A. Fegarty and Miss C.M. Curtis
The engagement is announced between Paul, younger son of the late Mr and Mrs Thomas Fegarty, of Bracknell, Berkshire, and Catherine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Liam Curtis, of Ashford, Kent.

Mr S.B. Lavens and Miss K.E. Scatchard
The engagement is announced between Steven, elder son of Mr and Mrs Andre Lavens, of London, and Kelcey Elizabeth, daughter of Dr and Mrs Michael Scatchard, of Harrogate, North Yorkshire.

Mr B.E. Mayes, MRCVS, and Miss C.M. Kfouri
The engagement is announced between Benjamin, son of Mr and Mrs Norman Mayes, of Chipstead, Surrey, and Catherine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Kfouri, of Liphook, Hampshire.

Mr J.B. Moffatt and Miss J.E. Butler
The engagement is announced between Joseph, son of Rev and Mrs Tom Moffatt, of Padgate, Warrington, and Joanna, daughter of Mr and Mrs Geoff Butler, of Elstead, Surrey.

Mr C.A. Sword and Miss S.J. Walsh
The engagement is announced between Charles Anthony, son of Mr and Mrs Anthony Sword, of Norwich, Norfolk, and Sarah Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Walsh, of Croesbychan, Wales.

Mr N.A. Wood and Miss C.L. Gloyn-Cox
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, elder son of Mr and Mrs Donald Wood, of Fulham, London, and Caroline, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Laurence Gloyn-Cox, of Woodchester, Gloucestershire.

Mr J.J. Yates and Miss J.M. Simpson
The engagement is announced between Justin, son of Mr and Mrs Edgar Yates, of Ash, Somerset, and Julia, daughter of Mr David Simpson and the late Mrs Simpson, of Cheddington, Buckinghamshire.

Elections

Lady North, Chairman of Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Probation Committee, has been elected national chairman of the Central Probation Council. Mrs G Edwards (Essex) and Mr A Mossop (Cumbria) are vice-chairmen.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Mr Peter Attenborough, former Headmaster, Charterhouse, 60; Sir John Beith, diplomat, 84; Mrs Margaret Dupont, tennis champion, 80; Dr Chris Fay, chairman, Shell UK, 53; Brigadier Anne Field, former director, WRAC, 72; Mr J.M. Fleming, former chairman, Vauxhall Motors, 68; Mr Trevor Griffiths, playwright, 63; Lord Inchyra, 63; Earl Jellicoe, FRS, 80; Colonel Sir Bryce Knox, former Lord-Lieutenant of Ayrshire and Arran, 82; Mr Richard Mansell-Jones, chairman, Barlow International, 58; Professor David Melville, chief executive, Further Education Funding Council, 54; Mr Paul Parker, footballer, 34; Mr Barry Reamsbottom, joint general secretary, Public and Commercial Services Union, 49; Mr Ian Robertson, director, National Army Museum, 55; Mr Dave Sexton, football manager, 68; Dame Catherine Tizard, former Governor-General of New Zealand, 67; Professor George Wedell, former director-general, European Institute for the Media, 71.

TOMORROW: Professor John Albery, FRS, former Master, University College, Oxford, 62; Miss Jane Asher, actress, 52; Mr Michael Bryant, actor, 70; Mr James Buckley, chief executive, Baltic Exchange, 54; Mr Andrew Buxton, chairman, Barclays Bank, 59; Baroness Delacourt-Smith of Alteryn, 82; Sir Thomas Finney, former footballer, 76.

Lord Gilbert, 71; Mr Arthur Hailey, author, 78; Mr Nigel Hawthorne, actor, 69; Sir Douglas Henley, former Auditor-General, 79; Professor Denis Lawton, former Director, London University Institute of Education, 67; Admiral Sir Michael Livesay, 62; Professor Donald Lynden-Bell, FRS, astronomer, 63; Mr Robert E. McKee, former chairman and managing director, Conoco (UK), 52; Mr Stuart May, former senior partner, Theodore Goddard, 61; Professor Peter Moore, former Principal, London Business School, 70; Lord Orme, 75; Mr Gregory Peck, actor, 82; Miss Jennifer Penney, former ballerina, 52; General Colin Powell, KCB, former Chairman, American Joint Chiefs of Staff, 61; Lord Rockley, 64.

ANOTHER GRAND NATIONAL NOT A RUNNER, SAY AINTREE OFFICIALS.

BY RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE organisers of the Martell Grand National yesterday ruled out rerunning the world's most famous steeplechase this year.

Less than 24 hours after two false starts reduced the 4½ mile marathon to a farce and ended in the race being declared void, Aintree officials reluctantly decided it would not be practical to stage the 150th Grand National this season or in November, early in the 1993-94 jump racing campaign.

The Jockey Club, whose senior starter Captain Keith Brown is involved, will launch a formal investigation this morning into racing's biggest fiasco which cost the Chancellor £6 million in lost betting duty and deprived the sport of an estimated £1 million income.

William Hill, who expected to make £2 million profit from Saturday's race, said yesterday that it was considering legal action against Aintree for loss of earnings and the £150,000 it had spent on marketing the race. The firm also called for the use of starting stalls for jump racing.

Race organisers could face "unlimited" claims for compensation from owners, trainers and jockeys, lawyers said yesterday, although litigants would have to break new legal ground to win their cases. Bookmakers face a chaotic start to the week as they attempt to return the £75 million waged on the race by an estimated 15 million punters.

In contrast, the North West Animal Rights Coalition, whose members' actions in running on to the track before the first fence contributed to the confusion among jockeys at the start of the race, were delighted. "The people in charge are trying to play down our role in stopping the race but we believe that we were instrumental in its collapse," said a spokesman.

As the full impact of the Aintree catastrophe and national humiliation sank in, Ken Evans, the flag man at the centre of the controversy, denied that he was to blame. On Saturday, Rod Fabricius, acting clerk of the course, said Mr Evans had failed to respond to the second false start and had not raised his red flag to stop jockeys as they headed for the first fence.

Mr Evans said yesterday: "I did my job. It is not my fault. I waved the flag." He has been a flagman for ten years and worked at the last three Grand Nationals.

A close examination of the second false start yesterday disclosed that Captain Brown may have been at fault as he attempted to send the horses on their way. When Captain Brown raised his red flat to signal another false start to Mr Evans, he appeared to be holding on to the material as well as the flag handle and it did not unfurl. Following the first false start, Captain Brown could have done away with the starting tape, suspended between two gantries and stretching 80 yards across the course. Instead he could have used a flag to start the race. He chose not to do so.

Peter Greenall, chairman of Aintree, said yesterday the racecourse was setting up its own investigation. Explaining the decision not to re-run this year's race, Greenall said: "Trainers overwhelmingly say that it would not be practical from the horses' point of view to run the 1993 Grand National again this season."

ON THIS DAY

April 4, 1993

After the fiasco of two false starts and a void Grand National race on April 4, 1993, an inquiry recommended widespread changes to the start which have since been introduced.

TREVOR MEEKS



In the thick of it: the starter, with his arm raised, presides over one of the two false starts

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
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FAX: 0171 481 9313

Let us strive to know the Lord, whose coming is as sure as the sunrise. He will come to us like the rain, like spring rains that water the earth. Hosea 6 : 5

BIRTHS

BARLEY - On April 2nd to Michèle (née Thoden van Velzen) and Craig, a daughter, Anna Rose Pamela, a sister for Lauren.

EDWARD - On March 30th in Los Angeles to Melanie and David, a son, Quintin James.

FRY - To Judy (née West) and Michael, a beautiful daughter, Penny May Elizabeth, born 31st March 1998, a playmate for James and welcomed granddaughter for Margaret & Fred Packer, and Peter & Sylvia Fry.

HARRIS - On 10th March 1998, at the hospital of St. John and St. Elizabeth to Chris and Caroline Harris, a daughter, Sophie Elizabeth.

MANN - On March 27th 1998 to Sarah (née Thomas) and Christopher, a beautiful son, Alexander William Thomas.

OSMOND - On 29th March at New York Cornell Hospital to Caitlin (née West) and Robin, a son, Alexander Samuel Francis.

PERCIVAL - On 26th February in Salisbury to Helena (née Taggart) and Roderick, a son, George Alexander Tristan.

PIDGEON - On April 2nd at Lisadough Hospital to Dawn (née Christopherson) and John, a daughter Emma Kate Elizabeth, a sister for Christopher.

QUINAULT - On 23rd March, to Lucia (née Conybeare) and Jamie, a son, Rollo Martin Conybeare.

RODRIGUES - On 27th March to Julie (née Ayton) and Jonathan, an adorable son, George David. A grandson for Betty.

ROUNDS - On March 24th, to Jenny (née Feltham) and Chris, a daughter, Isabelle Florence. A sister for James, Tom, Nick, Sebastian, Emily and Charlie. "That's All Folks!".

ANNIVERSARIES

STOREY:CHAPLIN - "Bob" and Sally, at All Saints Church, Feering, Essex on 5th April 1997.

DEATHS

ASQUITH - Hase. Requiem mass at Our Lady of Grace, Chiswick at 12.30 pm April 7th 1998.

BOSS - Anthony Russel. In Cork, on April 2nd at Cork University Hospital after a short illness. Dearest husband of Anne. So sadly missed by his wife, children Carine, Abbe, Holly and Julian and by the many people who loved him. Cremation at Glasnevin Cemetary on Tuesday April 7th. Immediate family only. Personal tributes to Mt. Conway House, Woodlands Estate, Frankfield, Cork, Ireland.

CALDER - Stephen Michael aged 45 years died peacefully at home with his family on March 27th. Devoted husband of Gillian, very dear father of Martin and Laura, beloved only son of Ellen and the late Mr Stephen Calder. Much loved by his sisters, Marilyn, Elizabeth, Caroline, Diane and their families. Highly respected officer of The G.L.C., I.L.E.A. and Richmond Education Service. The funeral will take place on Monday April 6th at 11.30am at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, all friends and colleagues welcome. Any enquiries regarding flowers or donations to Macmillan Cancer Relief, tel: F.W. Paine F/ds 0181 399 2060.

CHURCHILL - On March 29th 1998 Diana Mead, wife of Harry and mother of Jane and Richard.

COHEN - Joyce, peacefully on 1st April aged 91. Widow of Judge Arthur Cohen and mother of the late John and Nicholas Baber. Cremation private. Service of Thanksgiving at Holy Trinity Church, Cockfosters Hill at 2.30pm on Wednesday 15th April. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Musicians Benevolent Fund c/o Ebbutt F/S, High Street, Linspefield RH8 0DR.

DAVIS - Harold David on April 2nd at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital after a short illness. Beloved husband of Jeanne, loving father of Diana and Anthony, grandfather of Georgia and caring father-in-law of Priscilla and Nicholas. Funeral Service at Golders Green Crematorium on Tuesday April 7th at 11.30am. Friends welcome. Memorial Service to be held at a later date.

LOWE - peacefully at Goodrich, Herefordshire on 2nd April, Lawrence William, a few days before his 89th birthday. Much loved husband of Tryphena, father of Lawrence and Rodney and grandfather to five grandchildren and 3 much enjoyed great-grandchildren. Cremation will be at Cinderford Crematorium, Gloucestershire on 9th April at 11.00 a.m. No flowers or letters please but donations if desired towards a prize to be awarded by the London Chamber of Commerce (Examination Board) should be sent c/o Abbotsfield, 1 Castlhope Rd, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 7AN.

MASON - Suddenly on March 29th Alan Phillip aged 61 years, husband of Carole, father of Catherine, Jennifer and Philip, brother of Brenda and Bric. Funeral private. Donations if desired to The British Red Cross (Devon Branch), c/o Alison Maddaford, Palmers (Exmouth) Funeral Service, 43 Rolle Street, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 2SN. Telephone: 01395 222333.

RASHBI - Charles Luigi Domenico of Highgate West Hill, Chartered Accountant. On March 30th aged 84. Beloved husband of Vivian (née Poulter) much loved father of Judith, Martin, Peter and Angela. Caring grandfather of eleven, and brother to Jean. Funeral Service at St Anne's Church, Highgate West Hill, London N6 on Tuesday April 7th at 1.30pm followed by burial at St Pancras Cemetery. Family flowers. Donations preferred to Marie Curie Centre c/o Judith Ward, 71 Chandos Avenue, London N20 9BG.

SELLICK - Vera. Formerly of Dulwich. Died peacefully at Millbridge Nursing Home, Heacham, Norfolk on 31st March 1998. Aged 101. Widow of Dick, mother of Richard, grandmother and great grandmother. Funeral Service at Mintlyn Crematorium, Kings Lynn on Thursday 9th April at 12.15pm. Family flowers only, but donations if desired for St. Stephens Church, South Dulwich. C/O John Lincoln F/D, 40 Grevegate, Hunstanton, Norfolk PE36 6AG.

WILL - John Maunden, suddenly at home on 2nd April, aged 85 years. Greatly loved father of Rosemary and Peter, father-in-law of Tony and Gillie, grandfather of Charles and Ebbie, Alex and Steve, and Katherine. He will be sadly missed by them and his many friends. Funeral Service at All Saints Church, Awbridge, Nr. Romsey, Hants on Wednesday, 8th April at 2.30pm followed by cremation at Southampton. Family flowers only but donations, if desired, to Parkinson's Disease Society or Salisbury Cares may be sent to A.H. Chester, Funeral Directors, Romsey, Hants.

WOOD - Frances May (Nancy) of Lastingham aged 88, peacefully on 2nd April after a short illness. Beloved wife of the late Alex Wood; much loved mother and mother-in-law of Dennis and Jane, Jeremy and Lesley; dearly loved Granny of Alex, Bertie, Sarah and Tom. Funeral Service at St Mary's, Lastingham on Tuesday 7th April at 2pm. Enquiries to W. Bumby & Son, Kirkbymoorside, York. Tel: 01751-432737.

WOOD - Ted. Sadly missed by Family and Friends. Service Wednesday 8th April midday, Norwegian Seamen's Church, 1 Albion Street, SE16. Morrisks Crematorium 2pm.

YEADON - Suddenly on Thursday 2nd April 1998, Brian Mayhew. Loved father and father in law. To Julia, Jill and Alison my thoughts are with you. Steve.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

BELL - On April 5, 1911, suddenly at Printing House Square, E.C., Charles Frederick Moberley Bell, Managing Director of The Times, of 22, Park Crescent, Portland Place, W., aged 64.

VYVYAN - (Crown) Jennifer Beloved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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FORTHCOMING MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGES

Over the Easter period the following deadline will apply:
All notices to appear on Friday April 10th, Saturday April 11th, Monday April 13th and Tuesday April 14th must be received in writing by 5pm on Wednesday April 8th.

Please send Court Page announcements by post/fax to:
Mrs J. Noonan, Court & Social Advertising, The Times, PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E1 9XS.
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Please include in all correspondence:
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3 STEETLEY DENT LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 00147870
4 STAMFORD WASTE DISPOSAL LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 01146181
5 REDLAND FIELDCASTLE LIMITED (FORMERLY KNOWN AS REDLAND PRECAST LIMITED)
COMPANY NUMBER 00605088
6 ROWLOW LIME AND STONE COMPANY LIMITED (THE)
COMPANY NUMBER 00627026
7 EVERSTFIELD LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 02671067
8 NORVILLE AGGREGATES LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 02362466
9 STEETLEY OVERSEAS LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 00342214
10 ELLINTON SUPPLIERS LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 5067347
(ALL IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
On 20 March 1998 the above named companies were placed in members' voluntary liquidation and Colin Graham Bird of Price Waterhouse was appointed liquidator by the shareholders. The liquidator gives notice under the provisions of Rule 4.182A of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the creditors of the companies must send details, in writing, of any claim against the companies to the liquidator, at No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9GL, by 30 May 1998 which is the last day for proving claims. The liquidator also gives notice that he will then make a final distribution to creditors and that a creditor who does not make a claim by the date mentioned will not be included in the distribution. The companies are able to pay all their known creditors in full. Date 1 April 1998
CG Bird
Liquidator

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COMPANY NUMBER 2752991
DE LA RUE MONTHLY PENSION SCHEME TRUSTEE LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 2752993
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COMPANY NUMBER 2656951
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COMPANY NUMBER 2561405
BRADBURY WILKINSON (PENSIONS) LIMITED
COMPANY NUMBER 1888280
(ALL IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION)

NOTICE TO THE CREDITORS
On 24 March 1998 the above named companies were placed in Members' Voluntary Liquidation and Colin Graham Bird of Price Waterhouse was appointed as liquidator by the shareholders. The liquidators gives notice under the provisions of Rule 4.182A of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the creditors of the companies must send details, in writing, of any claim against the companies to the liquidators, at No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9GL, by 30 April 1998 which is the last day for proving claims. The liquidator also gives notice that he will then make a final distribution to creditors and that a creditor who does not make a claim by the date mentioned will not be included in the distribution. All known creditors have been or will be paid in full.
Date 31 March 1998
CG Bird
Liquidator

TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to s27 of the TRUSTEE Act, 1925 that any person having a CLAIM against or an INTEREST in the ESTATE of any of the deceased persons whose names, addresses and descriptions are set out below is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his claim or interest to the person or persons mentioned in relation to the deceased person concerned before the date specified, after which date the estate of the deceased will be distributed by the personal representatives among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

BERGMAN, OVRAR FOLKE of 105 High Street, Old Portsmouth, Hampshire died on 5 October 1997 particulars to OSMOND GAUNT & ROSE Solicitors of WINSTON HOUSE, 349 HIGH ROAD PARK ROAD, FINCHLEY, LONDON N3 1DH (Ref: 26/741/97) before 5 June 1998

PAYNE, Violet Adelaide Isobel of Goldsborough Nursing Home, 112a Wawcombe Park Road, London, SE23 died on the 6th day of January 1998, particulars to Pritchard Joyce & Rhode, St Brides House, 32 High Street, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 1AY (Ref: CC), on or before 8th June 1998

LEGAL NOTICES

COMPANY NUMBER 2458976
CAMPBELL'S U.K. LIMITED
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
On 17 March 1998 the above named company was placed in Member's Voluntary Liquidation and Colin Graham Bird and Anthony Victor Lomas of Price Waterhouse were appointed as liquidators by the shareholders. The liquidators give notice under the provisions of Rule 4.182A of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that the creditors of the companies must send details, in writing, of any claim against the company to the liquidators, at No 1 London Bridge, London SE1 9GL, by 28 April 1998 which is the last day for proving claims. The liquidators also give notice they intend to distribute the assets of the company without making a final distribution to creditors and that a creditor who does not make a claim by the date mentioned will not be included in the distribution. All known creditors have been or will be paid in full.
Date 19 March 1998
CG Bird, Joint Liquidator

LYDIA DELECTORSKAYA

Lydia Delectorskaya, model and secretary to Henri Matisse, died in Paris on March 16 aged 87. She was born in Tomsk, Siberia, on June 23, 1910.

"When I am bored, I do a portrait of Madame Lydia. I know her like the back of my hand." The words were spoken by Henri Matisse of Lydia Delectorskaya. They sum up the mix of intimacy, respect and comfort that came to characterise the painter's relations with the resourceful Russian who played the role of muse, secretary and confidante during his late period, from the mid-1930s to his death in 1954 — and, beyond it, of expert and guardian of his oeuvre. The importance of her presence can be compared to that of Marie-Thérèse Walter in Picasso's work of the same period.

As Matisse said in 1939: "My models ... are the principal theme in my work. I depend entirely on my model, whom I observe at liberty, and then I decide on the pose which best suits her nature." The question of the sentimental, or even fleetingly sexual, relation between the young Russian and the ageing and ailing artist was, however, another matter. She was, and remained, nobly discreet, and reluctant to draw advantage or fame from her position.

From her father, a paediatrician at a university medical school with communicative enthusiasm, Lydia Delectorskaya acquired a passionate curiosity and sense of commitment to work, and the ambition to become a doctor. She would accompany him on his rounds. During the Civil War she was thus witness to the fighting between White Russians and Bolsheviks — and to her father's dedication in succouring the wounded of both sides.

When her mother and father died in 1922 as a result of the typhus epidemic that swept through Siberia in the wake of the conflict, Lydia was looked after by a widowed aunt. After living in Harbin, Manchuria, for several years, they moved, in 1929, to Paris where she sought to enrol at the Sorbonne. However, if her academic standards were high enough to gain admission, she lacked the financial resources to cover the cost of her studies. So at the age of 19 she chose to marry a fellow Russian émigré. It was, no doubt, a hasty decision, and the relationship lasted barely a year.

Fleeing her difficulties, she headed south to Nice, another French city known for its Russian community. Not that this brought great fortune: she scraped a living from dead-end jobs that ranged from modelling and working in a patisserie to dancing in a casino. Among the employment on offer, an artist was looking for helpers to assist him on a large-scale work. This was Matisse, whom she met quite by chance in 1932.

The work was *The Dance*, the huge triptych commissioned by the Barnes Foundation in America. Once it was done, Lydia left. But six months later in October 1933, she was back — this time as a companion for his wife. It was not long, however, before Matisse was sketching her and then asking her to pose. Very soon, she was his main model, a position she retained until 1939. Among the paintings she inspired are the *Young Girl in a Blue Blouse*, *Pink Nude*, *Lady in Blue*, *The Dreamer*, *The Romanian Blouse*, *The Blue Eyes* and *Still-life with a Sleeper*. This was Matisse's last great period of experimentation, one of formal simplification culminating in the gouache cut-outs of his final years.

With her pale skin, blue eyes and golden hair, Lydia was worlds away from the more languorous, Mediterranean style of Matisse's previous models. In a sense, this protected her as a model: she always sensed that "I was not his type". When not posing, Lydia acted as Matisse's secretary and kept the photographs recording the various stages of the major works (*Pink Nude* went through 22).

She accompanied him in his movements between Nice and his studio in the Villa Alesia, Paris. Matisse's health was beginning to fail and, as it did, Lydia's role expanded to embrace that of support and carer. She was with him for his colostomy operation in Lyons during the Occupation years, then in Vence and Nice. Devoting herself to all the ancillary aspects of Matisse's work, she enabled him to concentrate on the essential and thus to make the most of his creative powers despite his diminished condition.

After the insecurity of her youth, she was gaining in assurance and purpose. "I had to learn to take charge, to give orders, to organise everything," she said. Visitors were struck by the feeling of calm and intense concentration that reigned in the studio. One even compared it to an operating theatre.

When Matisse started making his gouache cut-outs, it was Lydia who did much of the cutting and recruited helpers to apply the gouache to the paper. Often, she would be the one to pin the resulting shapes to the canvas as the artist instructed her. After his death, in 1954, she continued to mount unfinished works on proper canvas backings.

Only recently, *L'Océanie la terre* and *L'Océanie le ciel*, two monumental works that she finished assembling not long before her death, were donated to the Matisse Museum in Cateau-Cambrésis, with which she remained involved to the end of her life. She also gave generously of her time to researchers and exhibition organisers, and provided much of the information in Louis Aragon's book, *Henri Matisse: A Novel* (1971; English edition, 1972). In 1986, she organised an exhibition and produced a lavish book, *L'Apparente facilité* ("With Apparent Ease"), tracing in detail the process whereby Matisse honed the image of *The Dreamer* down to the pure forms of the final state. Her second publication, *Contre vents et marées* ("Against Winds and Tides"), was published in 1996, and likewise contained numerous insights into Matisse's creativity.

Lydia Delectorskaya's devotion to Matisse's work went hand in hand with a remarkable selflessness. Rather than treat them as a pension, she donated the drawings and paintings he had given her to the Russian state, preferring to make her own living after his death as a translator. She never married.



Henri Matisse's muse: Delectorskaya, right, was the model for *The Blue Eyes*



THE RIGHT REV JOHN ALLIN

The Right Rev John Allin, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of the United States, 1973-86, died in Jackson, Mississippi, on March 6 aged 76. He was born on April 22, 1921.

JOHN ALLIN led America's Episcopalians through a time of great difficulty and division. When he was elected Presiding Bishop in 1973, he found himself at the head of a Church which was rapidly losing members and torn by conflicting views on liturgical reform, social activism and the ordination of women. Firmly conservative in his theology (less so in his politics), he nevertheless pursued a policy of diplomacy and reconciliation. By the time he retired he had managed at least to stem the losses and done much to restore the Church to financial health. But the compromises he brokered remained (and remain) uneasy, particularly in the matter of women's ordination.

John Maury Allin was born in Helena, Arkansas. He was educated at the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee, graduating from its school of arts and sciences in 1943 and from its divinity school, St Luke's Seminary, two years later. He served first at a newly established mission in Conway, Arkansas, before moving to a curacy in New Orleans, where he also acted as chaplain to the city's Episcopal students and as a city missioner, visiting hospitals, prisons and old people's homes.

In 1958, after several years as rector of Monroe, Louisiana, he was elected president and rector of All Saints' Junior College in Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he remained for three years before being appointed bishop co-adjutor of Mississippi. He succeeded to the bishopric in 1966.

By the standards of the Deep South from which he came, Allin could certainly have been regarded as a political liberal. As bishop of a Southern diocese in a traditionally conservative, upper-crust Church, he was not afraid to make enemies by supporting some of the aims of the civil rights movement. In particular, while working in Jackson, Mississippi, he helped to found the Committee of Concern, an alliance between ecumenical and civic leaders which aimed to defuse racial tensions and raise funds to rebuild more than 100 black churches firebombed by white supremacists.

The diplomacy with which he approached the racial conflicts of the American South worked equally well in his work for the Church at national level and in various ecumenical initiatives. But his talent for reconciliation was to be taxed to the full during his 13-year term as the 23rd Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

Allin's election to succeed the activist Bishop John Hines was fiercely debated at the General Convention of the Church in Louisville, Kentucky, in October 1973. The objections came not primarily from those conservative Episcopalians who had been alienated by Hines's use of church funds to further black and Hispanic causes (beside which Allin's own support for civil rights seemed fairly mild); rather was it Allin's theological conservatism which drew liberal opposition.

The principle of admitting women to the priesthood had been narrowly approved by the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops in New Orleans in 1972, but it was twice rejected by the House of Deputies — and this had prevented its being adopted. Nevertheless, a month after Allin took office in 1974, three American bishops announced their intention to ordain 11 women. The intention was carried out in Philadelphia (with the support of that city's bishop) on July 29.

Allin himself insisted that these ordinations were "contrary to the constitution and canons of the Episcopal Church", adding that "any bishops involved in such a service have exceeded their authority, and have not acted for the whole Church, as is the norm in ordinations. Accordingly, the ordinations are irregular and may be found invalid."

Forthright though that condemnation seemed, the distinction between "irregular" and "invalid" offered an opportunity for compromise, which was duly seized. Allin persuaded the House of Bishops to take no formal action against the bishops who had carried out the ordinations, and in 1976 the Church's General Convention regularised the position by voting to permit women's ordination after all.

The following year, at a House of Bishops' meeting in Port St Lucie, Florida, Allin offered to resign, rather than continue as a Presiding Bishop "who is unable to accept women in the role of priest". The meeting declined his resignation, and instead passed a resolution affirming his leadership and respecting his "right to hold a personal conviction on this issue". It also adopted "a statement of conscience" under which "no bishop, priest, or lay person should be coerced or penalised in any manner" for opposing the ordination of women. How much longer the compromise built on such "conscience clauses" can survive remains to be seen. The American Episcopal Church, which is part of the Anglican Communion and will be represented by both men and women prelates at this summer's Lambeth conference, consecrated its first female bishop in February 1989.

The other great controversy during Allin's time in office concerned the adoption of a new Book of Common Prayer for standard usage in 1979, the culmination of a long process of modernisation and revision. Here, too, the Presiding Bishop took a pragmatic line, once telling a meeting that he was "weary of the carping and the putdowns" and insisting that the Church had more important business than squabbling over liturgy.

Allin's pragmatism was not enough to prevent some opponents of women's ordination or of Prayer Book reform from leaving the Episcopal Church. But Allin also presided over one of the most effective campaigns of fundraising and renewal in the Church's history. Known as Venture-in-Mission and intended to "release the human and financial resources of the Church", it went some way to compensate for any departures.

Allin had not hesitated to speak out on political matters during his time in office, and he used his farewell address as Presiding Bishop, delivered at the Church's General Convention in 1985, to criticise President Reagan's excessive concern with the business of national security. After retiring he served for a time as vicar of St Ann's Episcopal Church in Kennebunkport, Maine, where George Bush was a regular worshipper. Although on friendly terms with the then President, Allin used the pulpit on more than one occasion to urge his Administration to devote less attention to foreign policy and more to social injustice nearer home.

John Allin is survived by his wife Ann, whom he married in 1949, and by a son and three daughters.



JIMMY SCOULAR

Jimmy Scoular, Scotland international footballer and manager, died on March 19 aged 73. He was born on January 11, 1925.

IN THE years immediately after the Second World War there was no more feared opponent on the soccer field than Jimmy Scoular. His determination occasionally stretched beyond the limits of fair play, and errant colleagues were liable to suffer the considerable force of his tongue. But if Scoular tackled as though satisfying a personal vendetta, he was also one of the finest long-range passers of the day.

The young James Scoular had a single ambition: to follow his father into football in his native Scotland. Alec Scoular had played for Alloa Athletic, Stenhousemuir and Leith Athletic, but his son was drafted into the Royal Navy as a teenager to serve during the war, and headed south of the border for training. He was spotted by Portsmouth while playing as an amateur in Gosport, where he served as an engineer at the submarine support base *HMS Dolphin*.

At Fratton Park his partnership along the half-back line with Jimmy Dickinson launched Portsmouth into the most successful period of their history. Where Scoular breathed fire, castigating all around, Dickinson went about his business with a quiet modesty.

Portsmouth repelled a strong challenge from Sir Matt Busby's first great Manchester United team to become first division champions in 1949, and retained the title the following season. Scoular, irascible, missed the last two games of the 1949-50 season through suspension after being sent off, a rare occurrence in those days and a considerable embarrassment.

Indeed, while Scoular enjoyed enormous popularity among supporters, and played nine times for Scotland, his relationship with the club was less happy. He was sent home from a tour of Brazil in 1949 after trouble behind the scenes, and despite his unquestioned ability there was some relief in the directors' box when he asked for a transfer in 1953.

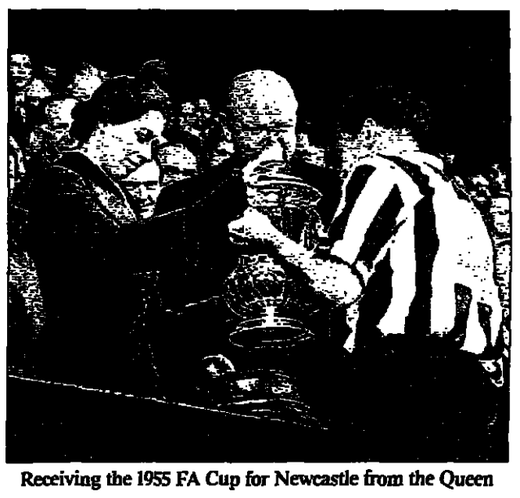
Newcastle United paid £22,000, earmarking him to succeed Joe Harvey as captain. Given Scoular's disciplinary problems he was a controversial choice. Harvey was probably the best leader ever to set foot in St James' Park, and had lifted the FA Cup in 1951 and 1952. Only a strong man could follow him.

Scoular was not found wanting. He stood just 5ft 7in tall, but in muscular — and vocal — presence he was a giant. Even allowing for assistance from a prevailing sea wind, there must be a good deal of exaggeration about the goal he is supposed to have scored from 70 yards for Portsmouth against Manchester City — past the great Bert Trautmann, no less — but Scoular could certainly kick the heavy leather balls of those days a long, long way.

His career reached its pinnacle in 1955 when Newcastle beat Manchester City at Wembley to win the FA Cup for the sixth time. City had baffled teams with the tactic of withdrawing Don Revie, ostensibly the centre-forward, into a deeper position. Scoular responded with a tight marking role to deny Revie space, and also created two goals in the 3-1 win with typical crossfield passes to Bobby Mitchell.

He stayed at Newcastle until 1961 before moving to Bradford Park Avenue as player-manager. Promotion to the third division followed, but Scoular was sacked in 1964, three months after retiring as a player. Over the next nine years he established Cardiff City as the leading club in Wales. Seven times, under his command, they won the Welsh Cup, and in 1968 he led them to the semi-finals of the European Cup Winners' Cup before losing to SV Hamburg.

A succession of scouting jobs for Aston Villa, Wolves, Swansea City and Newcastle sandwiched a year as manager of Newport County. He worked in a jewellery business and ran a guesthouse in Cardiff, a considerable test of his self-restraint. Given that his voice had once been his sword, it was ironic that his speech was destroyed by the first of a number of strokes. He is survived by his wife, Joyce, and their three daughters.



Receiving the 1955 FA Cup for Newcastle from the Queen

MILESTONES



Baroness Lestor of Eccles, former Labour MP and junior minister, and party chairman, 1977-78, died on March 27 aged 66. She was born on November 13, 1931.

IN 1966 the constituency of Eton and Slough elected a leftwinger who believed public schools should be abolished. Joan Lestor was a political free spirit who marched with CND and opposed prices and incomes legislation and entry into the EEC. But her most important campaigns were the fight against racism and for the welfare of children. At the end of her first Parliament, she was briefly Under-Secretary for Education and when Labour returned to office in February 1974 she became Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office. Within 18 months, in circumstances that remain controversial, she parted company with Jim Callaghan and was back at Education, where she remained for less than a year before resigning over the impact of cuts on schools. During Labour's latter years in the wilderness — she returned to the Commons for Eccles in 1987 after losing her seat at Eton in 1983 — she went back onto the National Executive Committee and was usually voted into the top half of the Shadow Cabinet, resigning from it in 1996 through ill-health. She was created a life peer on retiring from the Commons last year.

Obituary published on March 30.



Joan Maynard, Labour MP for Sheffield Brightside, 1974-87, died on March 27 aged 76. She was born on July 5, 1921.

FAMOUSLY dubbed "Stalin's granny" by a fellow Labour MP, Joan Maynard never apologised for following a brand of socialism that was defiantly of the old-fashioned, unreconstructed sort. Born in the North Riding of Yorkshire, she went on to work for the agricultural workers' union and joined the Labour Party in 1946, becoming a rural district and then a county councillor. In 1972 she won a seat on Labour's National Executive after moving a party conference motion calling for a state takeover of all land, and two years later she became the candidate for Sheffield Brightside. As an MP she regularly attacked her own front bench and provoked bitter controversy by supporting calls for troops to be withdrawn from Northern Ireland. She retired from the Commons in 1987.

Obituary published on March 30.

David Hicks, interior decorator and designer, died on March 29 aged 69. He was born on March 25, 1929.

WHEN his refurbishment of his mother's house in South Eaton Place was featured in *House and Garden*, David Hicks found he had three prospective clients, so he set up as a professional decorator. During the 1960s his plain but vibrant colours became fashionable with the aristocracy — he had married the younger of Earl Mountbatten of Burma's daughters in 1960 — and his clients included the Prince of Wales, Helena Rubinstein and Douglas Fairbanks Jr. International boutiques followed, stocking Hicks's wallpapers, carpets, bed linens and accessories. He published nine books on aspects of design, and branched out into architectural and garden planning. He is survived by his wife, Lady Pamela Hicks, and by their son and two daughters.

Obituary published on March 31.



General Sir Frank King, GCB, MBE, Director of Operations Northern Ireland, 1973-75, died on March 30 aged 79. He was born on March 9, 1919.

WHEN Frank King became GOC and Director of Operations Northern Ireland in 1973, the bombings and shootings were running at 12,000 a year. When he left three years later they were down to just over 2,000, though the IRA had begun operations on the mainland and was looking for softer targets. In 1974 he dealt with the Loyalist Ulster Workers' strike, and brought the IRA to its short-lived ceasefire that winter. He was subsequently Commander-in-Chief British Army of the Rhine, 1976-78, before going into business.

Obituary published on April 2.

Equities advance continues

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997/98 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
618	505	**Allied Domecq**	604	+ 8	4.0	15.5
412½	295	Bulmer (HP)	370½		5.0	11.5
42½	22½	Burn Stewart	25	- 1½	8.5	
757½	432	**Diageo▼**	752	+ 5½	2.4	32.8
900	775	Glenmorangie A	795		2.1	19.0
295	258	Highland Distl	264½	- 2½	4.3	12.1
213½	160	Matthew Clark†	208½		12.0	6.7
59½	45	Mnydwn W	46½		8.3	
1965½	1368½	SA Breweries	1965½	+ 187½	1.8	

BANKS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1440¾	1178¾	ABN-AMRO	1440¾	+ 31½	2.1	21.6
1345	1010	**Abbey Natl**	1215	- 8	3.2	18.6
1032	585	**Alliance & Leic**	927	+ 3	2.8	18.4
796½	567½	Allied Irish	765	+ 1½	2.4	21.5
425	376½	Aus New Z	425	- 16½	4.8	
5240½	3881½	Bank America	5240½	+ 196½		
758	431	**Bank Scotland**	754	+ 7	1.5	20.9
1996	1068	**Barclays†**	1778	- 25	2.6	18.2
1276	916½	Bk of Ireland	1176	- 8	1.8	25.8
8716½	6790½	Citicorp	8678½	+ 125		
1653½	1565½	Commerzbk	1581½	+ 9½	1.2	
543½	289½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	365½	+ 6½	1.0	
4662½	3668½	Deutsche Bk	4662½	+ 56½	1.3	
1206½	1168½	Espirito Santo	1175	+ 6½	3.1	
531	245½	Fuji Bank Y	314	+ 6½	1.2	63.6
2020	1294	**HSBC†**	1830	- 55	3.3	14.6
2002	837	HSBC HK†	1730	- 39	3.6	13.8
1000	700½	**Halifax†**	908	- 16	2.4	26.3
842½	642½	Irish Perm†	790	- 2½	2.1	
998	698	**Lloyds TSB†**	993	+ 23	2.2	36.4
893	770½	Nat Aust Bk	874½	+ 31½	4.4	
1208	751	**Nat West†**	1117	- 14	3.6	23.8
869½	575	Northern Rock	641½	+ 9½	2.1	24.0
1000	565	**Royal Bk Scot**	959	- 2	2.8	18.8
953	528	**Stand Chart†**	884	- 4	2.7	14.0
£164½	£164½	Wells Fargo	£164½			
427½	385½	Westpac	416½	+ 13½	3.4	
400	308	**Woolwich†**	367½	+ 1	3.2	18.9

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1180	873	**Bass▼**	1165	+ 9	3.0	20.9
61½	50½	Brr for the Bdr	56	- 1½	4.3	16.4
157½	144½	Burtonwd Brw	156½		5.6	13.8
141	110	City Centre Rest	141	+ 7½	2.5	
1140	581	**Compass Grp†**	1078	+ 28	1.1	37.5
325½	280½	Eldridge P 'A'	325½	+ 5	2.3	16.4
357½	251½	Enterprise Inns	357½	+ 6	2.6	19.7
472½	425	Fuller Sm 'A'	472½		2.8	15.2
477½	400	Greenalls Grp	451½		4.6	11.3
760	676½	Greene King	686	+ 2	3.1	14.0
275	197½	Grosvenor Inns†	275	+ 5½	2.9	36.0
335	260	Groupe Chez Ger	331		1.2	22.9
346½	214½	Hardy Hanson	332½	...	6.1	10.1
2175	1925	Hall J	1950		3.8	10.9
75	62	Inn Business†	74½	+ 2	3.1	11.2
305	279	Mansfield	294		3.1	12.1
330½	254½	Mitchells Thmp	315	- 3½	3.3	11.2
442½	427½	Morland	427½		3.9	10.8
379½	294½	Old Eng Pub	376	+ ½	0.8	29.7
31½	21½	Paramount	27	- ½		
829½	678½	PizzaExpress†	803½	- 13½	0.6	36.3
377½	297½	Ransdens (H)†	300	+ 2½	2.1	27.9
376½	302½	Regent Inns†	375½		1.2	26.8
227	140½	SFI†	214	- 1	0.5	37.3
950	717	**Scot & New**	908	- 18½	3.0	18.2
297½	227	Vaux Group	286	- 1½	4.9	12.1
342	273½	Wetherspoon JD†	333½		0.8	35.9
1133	850	**Whitbread**	1107	+ 3	2.8	19.0
530	469	Wolvrhmptn D	525	- 4	4.5	11.9
432	381	Yates Bros	430½	- 1	0.9	31.0
667½	637½	Young 'A'	647½		3.0	26.8

BUILDING MATERIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
68	49½	Aggregate Indst	61½	+ ½	3.6	21.2
405½	290	BPB	380	+ 1	3.2	17.4
106½	91½	Baggeridge Brk	100	- 1	4.4	13.5
62½	44½	Blockleys	55		0.4	
407	271½	**Blue Circle**	379½	- ½	3.9	14.0
123½	98½	Breedon PLC	121½		6.2	...
187½	125½	Br Dredging	184½	...	4.5	
929	705	CRH	901½	- 2½	1.2	
62½	47½	Cakebread Rby	60½		8.1	4.9
144	107½	Capet	138½		5.9	11.9
215½	158½	Caradon	189½	- ½	5.6	13.2
115	100½	Caradon pf	111½		8.1	
130½	90½	Chelfain Grt	120		4.5	8.8
219	217½	Dyson (J&J)	218½		3.3	13.0
120	115	Dyson 'A'	115	- 1½	6.2	6.9
60½	43½	Ennstone	53	- ½		
197½	147	Epwin	168½		7.6	8.9
115½	101½	Gibbs & Dandy	115		4.4	
190	154	Graham Grpt	188	+ 1	4.0	
282½	227½	Halstead (J)	256		4.7	18.0
395	245	Hanson†	351½	+ 1	4.3	12.1
265	179	Hepworth	238	- 10½	4.8	
152½	120½	Hewetson	151½	+ 1½	5.3	10.0
235½	202½	Heywd Wimt	225½		7.6	8.6
66	43	Ibstock†	51	- ½	6.4	
365	250	Johnston	262½		5.9	
107½	84½	Lilleshall	97½		6.4	9.6
118	82½	Marley†	105½	- ½	5.9	9.1
145½	120	Marshalls†	141½	+ ½	4.8	
412½	328½	Meyer Int	395	- ½	3.9	14.7
77½	64½	Norcros	71		3.3	15.6
134	103½	Pilkington	116	- 2	5.0	14.8
190	156½	Polypipe†	157½	- 4	2.7	11.8
24	14½	Quiggin	17½			14.7
1016	740½	RMC Gp	953	+ 6	3.3	13.4
110½	78½	Ruberoid	106½	- 3	6.0	
139½	111½	Rugby Group	121½		4.2	17.1
85	76½	Russell (A)	82½		4.6	
253	195½	SIG	205		4.9	10.1
3½	1½	SWP	2	+ ½		10.9
227½	220½	Sharpe & Fisher†	223½		3.5	
35	14½	Spring Ram	22½	+ ½	0.6	
268½	144½	Streamline Hldgs	263		4.5	
130½	93	Tarmac	118	- 1	6.1	13.9
88	83	Tilon	83		7.8	8.8
628½	457	Travis Perkins	593½	- ½	2.3	18.0
95	60½	Tudor	88½	- 1	4.3	
324½	180½	Ultraframe	322½		1.4	34.2
570	410	**Wolseley**	437		3.3	14.0

CHEMICALS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
185½	134½	Albright & Wilt	182	- ½	3.9	18.0
204½	110½	Allied Colloids	204½	+ 1	2.0	27.7
125	108½	Amber Ind	125	+ 2½	5.8	9.9
107½	92½	Amberley Gp	104½			17.6
100	72	Aldone Ex	85½	+		14.0
2275	2003½	BASF DM	2093½	+ 12½	3.2	
1109	850	**BOC**	904	- 17	3.7	15.5
422½	331½	BTP	415	- 7½	3.6	19.9
2537½	2131½	Bayer DM50	2431½	+ 12½	2.3	
136	99	Brent Chems†	102	+ 1	3.7	11.5
297½	210½	Br Vita†	297½	+ 2	3.7	15.0
187½	128½	Brunner Mond†	184	+ ½	5.9	10.1
298	266½	Canning (W)	292½	- 1	4.0	
229½	155	City Technology	195		2.4	37.7
474	234	Courtaulds	465½	+ 9	3.6	20.0
445	351½	Croda	427½	+ 5	2.5	20.2
240½	203½	Doeflex	240		4.5	10.0
152½	116	Elementis	137½	- 2½		23.4
313½	276½	Ellis & Everard	276½	- 4½	4.6	11.9
62½	53½	Euro Colour	58½		5.2	10.4
178½	138½	Gibbon	159½		5.5	10.8
92½	64½	Hickson†	89	+ ½	8.1	15.5
2425	2096½	Hoechst	2409½	- 3½	2.1	
265	223	Holliday Chem	262½		2.7	19.0
1200	738½	**ICI†**	1119	- 6	3.9	42.2
253	189	Inspec†	249	- 3	3.4	11.3
188½	141½	Kalon†	167		4.1	25.2
837	605	Laporte	818½	- 13	3.2	16.2
42	[illegible]	Mersien	65½		4.7	
35	31	Metrotect	31½		4.2	8.0
370	320	Porvair†	369		2.1	30.5
231	184	Scapa	183½	+ 1	3.9	10.3
22	16½	Sutcliffe Specit	19½	- 1	7.5	8.4
1761½	1455½	Takeda Chem	1553½	- 38½	0.4	29.5
248	221½	Victrex	246½		2.4	22.3
685	615	Wistnhlmo R	625		5.6	
240	208	Yorks Grp	236	- 1	4.9	
385½	282½	Yule Catto	382½	- 3	5.3	15.4

CONSTRUCTION

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
58½	19½	AAF Inds	46½			
330	230	Abbey	330		2.5	24.9
417½	332½	Allen	317½	- 1	2.7	20.5
163½	114	Amec	158½		4.0	15.3
705	400	Amey	695		2.0	
1025	722½	Andrews Sykes	975		1.9	
260	180	Ashtead†	260	+ 6	1.1	32.4
48½	28½	Avonside	46½	..	4.1	
35½	26½	Banro	33½		4.5	16.0
73	48½	Barcom	70		2.7	17.3
329	224	Barratt Devs	320		3.7	13.9
232	161½	Beazer	193	- 4½	4.5	10.8
401½	320½	Bellway	369½	- 3	3.1	12.3
35½	18½	Belwench	24½	- 1		8.4
95½	46½	Ben Bailey	85½	- 2	2.3	12.1
750	582½	Berkeley Gp	697½		1.7	12.3
167½	146	Bett Bros	146	- 1	5.8	4.4
300	270	Bool (Henry)	300		3.4	11.7
276½	192½	Bovis Homes	253	- 5½	4.6	11.1
127½	105	Brandon Hire	127½		3.2	15.3
39½	30½	Britannia Grp	39½	+ 2	2.8	7.5
155½	109	Bryant†	133		4.7	12.3
137½	102½	CALA	125		3.9	7.7
4	3	Campbell & Arm	3½			
136½	83½	Clarke T	133½		5.9	8.9
32½	20	Costain	28½	+ 1		
129½	97½	Countryside†	122½	- ½	3.1	11.6
142	94½	Crest Nicholson†	136	- 4½	3.4	11.6
118½	85½	Gussies	115		5.0	
210	160	Eve Group	208½		3.2	15.4
22½	19½	Galliford	21		6.2	12.2
1100	1015	Gleeson (MJ)	1025		2.3	15.0
175	126½	Havelock Euro	162½		3.8	9.8
192	152	Hewden-Stuart	188½	+ 3½	2.4	18.7
28	30	Howard Hldgs	27½		5.6	22.4
681	369½	Jarvis	640	- 4	1.3	32.8
251	181	Kellett	247½	- 1	2.6	
232½	199½	Kier†	220½	- 3	4.1	11.1
370½	309½	Laing (J)†	365	- ½	3.5	19.4
125	117½	Laing 6.4% Cv Pf	122½		6.5	
14½	8½	Lovell (YJ)	12½			
212½	155½	Maunders (J)†	209½		3.8	12.1
180	133½	McAlpine (A)	177	- 1	5.4	
154½	113½	McCarthy & S	148	+ 1	2.5	13.7
103	70	McInerney	103	+ 3		
235½	171½	Morgan Sindall†	206½		3.2	12.6
392½	301	Morrison Cons	391½		1.7	21.9
127	77½	Mowlem (J)†	117½	- 3½	4.3	10.8
259½	182½	Persimmon†	228½	+ ½	5.5	10.7
97½	80½	Peterhouse	96½		6.1	21.8
120	112	Pochins†	120		2.9	13.3
149½	116	Prowting	144½	- 2	3.6	13.3
198	142½	Redrow†	179½	- 2	2.6	13.3
322½	222½	Snaderr	310		1.5	
94½	77½	Swan Hill	83½	- 1	4.2	15.0
142½	128½	Tay Homes†	128½	- 1½	7.4	10.4
238	174	Taylor Woodrw†	229	- 2	2.0	17.2
283½	190	Tilbury Douglas†	259	- 2	4.6	
29½	21½	Try Group	28½		2.9	8.6
78½	63½	Vibroplant	76½		6.6	
135½	109½	Waterdens	133½	- 1½	4.4	13.8
52½	42½	Ward Hldgs	46½		7.0	6.6
272½	228½	Westbury	246½	- 1½	3.5	12.4
15	12½	Wiggins	13½	- ½		19.8
191	139½	Wilson (C)†	173½		4.0	13.3
861	511	Wilson Bowdn	644½		2.5	13.0
140½	92½	Wimpey G†	129	- ½	5.5	10.7

DISTRIBUTORS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
219½	182½	Action Cp Sols	218½		1.4	22.0
355	305	Adam & Harvey	330	- 2½	8.8	4.8
21	9½	Alexanders	19			
2	1½	Ass Br Eng	1½			58.6
457	362	BSS Group	362	- 1	7.3	10.9
20½	12½	Bearing Power	18½	- 1		
34½	34½	Bogod 'A'	34½		3.3	5.5
643	550	Brammer	642½	+ 5½	3.4	14.1
14	10½	Bridgend Gp	14	+ ½	1.8	63.9
95	79	Brit Fittings	86½	- 3	7.7	
370	345	Calfyns	362½		4.5	8.4
189½	170½	Car Group	181		3.2	17.1
150½	134½	Caverdale	143½		3.3	8.3
54	31½	Cook (DC)	48½		6.3	7.0
130½	96½	Dag Motors	130½	+ ½	8.8	
125½	105½	Dewhurst B	117½		3.2	9.3
265	217½	Diploma	247½	+ 1	7.3	10.0
536	450	Electrocomponts	534		1.9	28.7
186	143½	Eurodis Elect	147½		4.5	25.4
107½	84½	European Mtr	101½	+ ½	7.3	7.9
305	250½	Evans Halshaw†	281	+ 3½	7.6	9.0
64½	39½	Fife Indmar†	64½	+ 7	7.2	7.3
400½	357½	Finelist Grp†	382	- ½	2.7	15.3
27½	21½	Gardner†	27	- ½	4.6	11.5
82½	60½	Glencherton	73½	+ 2	3.5	
135½	89½	Goodwins	115½	- 2	3.3	
18½	13	HR Owen†	15½	+ ½	6.6	
402	340	Headlam	394	- 6	1.9	23.8
160	145	Holders Tech†	145		5.8	
120	81	ISA Intl	82½		5.1	6.3
250	136½	Inchcape†	217½		5.4	26.2
67½	57½	Jacks (Wm)	67½		4.6	8.7
535	351½	Kwik-Fit	485	+ 1½	1.7	21.8
541½	422½	Lex Service†	541	+ ½	4.0	13.7
123	100	Lookers†	116½		8.9	7.9
500	351	Menzies (John)	497½	+ 2½	3.5	16.1
5½	4	Middlesex	4½		2.6	11.6
19½	16½	Milestone	17	- ½	3.5	
306	242	Nortan	289		3.8	11.7
281	207½	Northmbr	211½	+ 2½	1.8	14.0
342	296½	Partco	330½	+ 10½	3.4	
312½	249½	Pendragon†	306½		4.4	14.5
242½	167½	Perry Gp	219		5.6	
443	272	Premier Farnell	385½		4.0	14.3
159½	119½	Quicks Group	149½		6.7	
285	195	REA	195		2.6	43.1
[illegible]	1½	Reece	2½			
37½	30½	Ring	30½			
12½	4½	Ronson	10½			
5½	3½	Ross Gp	4½			
112½	97½	Rybandt	109½	- ½	5.0	8.3
31	25½	SEP Indt	27	- ½	5.8	14.0
30	16½	Sabre	18½		8.1	
53½	48	Sedgemoor	50½	- ½	4.2	12.8
273½	236½	Symer	259½		3.3	12.1
195½	167½	Time Products	187½		8.3	7.7
210	132½	Trust Motor Grp	191	+ 3½	1.6	
432	390	UMECO	416		1.7	22.2
121	88½	United Cleas Gp	121	+ 8	0.4	26.9
299½	244½	Varon (Reg)†	297½	- ½	3.2	14.0
800	655	WF Elect†	750	- 2½	2.6	23.1
157½	140	Wyko†	150½	- 1	2.7	14.2
147½	135	Young (H)	142½		4.0	10.1

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
330	300	Antofagasta	305	- 10	2.3	26.6
310	229	Assoc Hldgs	306½	- 1	3.7	11.7
642	522½	Bolton HP	607	+ 1	3.3	16.7
697½	466½	**BATT**	545	- 25	4.8	14.8
43½	33	Brierley Inv	34½	+ 1½	9.0	8.5
248½	167	Coolsan†	239	+ 5½	3.8	12.8
235½	217½	Cosalt	235½	+ 10	6.0	9.3
585	410	DCC	525		1.9	19.6
383	316	Gallahert	325	+ 5	7.4	9.2
450½	288	Hutch Whamp	397½	+ 1½	3.2	
474½	383½	Imperial Tob	416	- 9	6.4	10.2
335½	231½	Jardine Math	257½	- 9½	6.1	
115	74½	Lowfoot	102½	- 2½	5.8	18.7
575	474½	Powell Duffryn	531	- 18½	5.9	13.8
147	101	Staveley	137	- 1	8.2	17.9
368½	259	Swire Pacific	309	+ 8½	4.5	
311½	241½	TT Group	311½	+ 1½	3.6	11.7
384½	288	Tomkins	356	- 3	3.4	15.1
230½	207½	Unidare	230		7.1	11.7
485	415	Wardle Storeys	485		5.3	14.8
381½	301½	Wassall	321½	- 1½	2.5	14.9
135½	127½	Whitecroft	128½	- ½	4.5	20.8

ELECTRICITY

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
593	310	Br Energy	585	+ 33	3.0	57.6
873½	600	**Energy Group**	846	+ 5	3.1	17.0
390	298½	**National Grid▼**	386	- 2½	3.7	15.2
700	518½	**National Power**	573	- 27	6.1	7.8
900	725	**PowerGen**	827	+ 1	4.0	12.8
597½	502½	Hydro-Elect	585		3.9	13.4
599	475	**Scottish Power**	553½	+ 5½	4.3	13.7
580	467	Southern Elec	542	+ 3	5.1	14.5
576	522	Viridian	523½		5.1	36.6

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
350½	311½	Acal	329½	- 3	3.9	10.5
1072½	680	Admiral†	1072½	+ 42½	0.3	
39½	27½	Amstrad†	34	+ ½	1.8	
34	26½	Arlen	27½		5.5	7.2
129½	106½	Astec	118		2.3	12.4
70	43½	Aston	46½	- 5		
173½	127½	BICC	147½	- ½	7.0	
75½	51½	Beales Hunter	73½	...	17.3	7.1
341½	260	Blick	341½	+ 16½	5.1	11.6
511½	345½	Bowthorpe†	495½	+ 7½	2.8	18.9
17	12	Bulgin A	14½		6.5	17.6
205½	150½	CML Micro	193½		3.9	23.1
27½	10½	Channel Hldgs	10½	- 1½	19.6	3.3
45½	38½	Chloride	43		2.0	10.3
109	64½	Clayhithe	109	+ 2½	4.1	12.1
810	722½	Coxchley	802½		2.0	21.5
317½	213½	Delta†	292½	- 1	5.5	8.7
451	392	Domnick	447½		3.4	15.7
77	64½	Dowding Mills	68	- 2	5.9	11.5
290	240	Druck	285	+ 10	0.8	30.7
5153½	4118½	Electrolux 'B'	5153½	+ 50	1.9	
24½	17	Eroxss	24½		3.1	
2943½	2128½	Ericsson 'B'	2943½	+ 43½	0.9	
386	331	Eurotherm	332½		3.8	14.6
590	463	Farley Group	581	- 2½	2.0	16.5
587½	428	Filtronic	522	+ 7	0.4	36.1
17½	7½	Forward Tech	14	- 1	2.2	
485	338	**GEC**	462		3.6	21.3
48	35½	Ind Control	44		1.4	
22	15	Intelek	15½		8.0	
73	54½	LPA Ind	60		4.7	22.1
18	7	Microvitec	8½	- ½	13.3	
425	425	Mitel	425			
177½	117½	Network Tech	142½	+ 7	1.1	16.6
326	255	Oxford Inst	311½	- 1½	3.1	11.0
55½	23½	Pace Micro†	56	+ 3½	4.5	
4775	3450	Philips Lmp	4337½	- 18½	1.1	
88½	38½	Plasmon	75½	+ 5	1.7	
345	272½	Pressac	309½	- 1	1.8	22.5
60½	33½	Prestrent	37	- 1½	3.8	10.3
462½	284	Psion†	302½	- 2	1.0	29.4
345	243½	Racal Elect	333	- 10	2.3	62.7
90½	51½	Radamec	62½		6.4	
415	335	Renishaw†	413½		2.7	34.2
1½	1½	Rodime	1½			
259½	191½	Rotork†	259	+ 2	3.5	
381	202½	SDX Bus Sys	274½	- 1	1.1	32.8
377½	244	Servomex†	362½		3.3	
48½	36½	Silvermines	44½		4.2	
4793½	4128½	TDK†	4693½	- 65½	0.6	
72½	59	TGI	63½	+ 3	7.0	6.6
107½	91	TLG	91½	- 7½	5.6	10.8
62	7	Tadpole Tech	28			
55½	38½	Telemetrix	48½		4.3	11.3
365	230	Telspec	318½		2.0	16.5
150½	122½	Thorpe FW†	144	+ 4	4.0	7.8
157½	70½	Total Systems	145½	- 6	1.2	31.4
125	100	Tunstall	121½		5.3	17.1
95½	66½	Verity	98	+ 1½	0.1	
125½	84½	Vero†	114	- 1½	6.4	
45	30½	Vigten Technology†	32		1.6	
520	460	Volex	520		5.1	14.2

ENGINEERING

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
280	242½	AIM†	245		3.8	11.5
44	28½	ASW	34	- ½		
255	145	Alumasc†	173		6.1	7.9
161	129½	Alvis	151	+ 1½	2.9	19.3
167½	159½	Ash & Lacy†	160½		6.0	
125	70	Aycliffe Metal	70		9.8	3.9
460½	345½	BBA†	432	+ 9	1.9	17.7
212½	150	**BTR†**	208½	+ 1½	4.6	12.1
87½	68½	BWI	84	- 3	4.9	9.3
85½	61	Babcock	73		2.1	
7½	6½	Bailey (CH)	7½		4.2	
99	77	Baynes (Charles)†	97½	+ ½	4.1	13.8
27½	12	Beaufort	13½		7.7	
37½	27	Benson Group	34½		5.4	32.6
230½	181½	Bensford	221½	- ½	3.2	12.7
97½	84	Bestia Cv Un Ln	94½		5.3	
1180	867½	Bodycote	1076		1.2	24.5
44½	38½	Booth Inds	38½	- 1		
20½	15½	Brasway	17½	- ½	6.4	7.9
141	117½	Bridport	127½	- 2	4.7	14.1
3090	1525	**Br Aerospace†**	1970	- 5	1.2	21.4
157	122½	**Br Steel**	145½	- 1½	8.6	13.3
156½	136½	Brooke Ind	140		4.5	7.7
16½	11½	Bruner	11½		5.3	5.4
102½	92½	Bullough†	94½	- 1	7.7	9.8
36	30	Carbo	30	- ½	5.0	
217½	172	Carclo Eng	173½		7.7	10.4
225	183½	Castings	212½		3.1	12.2
200	190	Chamberlin Hill	195		5.2	8.8
750	570	Charter†	678½	- 9	4.6	22.1
155½	110½	Chemring	135½	- 1	2.7	
275	235	Clyde Blowers	251		3.5	54.4
1050	732½	Cobham	1031½		1.6	26.7
430	400	Cohen (A)	410			
119½	107½	Concentric	117½		7.8	24.3
220½	184½	David Brown	190		5.7	11.3
325	282½	DS	285½	+ ½	5.9	9.8
20½	16	Deco	19½		7.8	
108½	72½	Elmos (B)	107½		3.7	14.3
155½	124½	Expamet	155		3.1	14.9
208	147½	FKI	201	- 2	3.3	18.3
195½	167½	Fenner	180½	+ 1	2.9	14.4
2½	1½	Femsa	1½			
40	29	Firth Hldgs	38½	- ½	0.9	27.3
154½	126½	Firth Rixson	148½	- 1	2.4	18.3
45½	27½	Flare	29½	+ 1	4.2	2.6
104	91½	GEI Intl	100		5.6	10.2
175½	148½	Garton Eng	175½	+ 2	5.8	6.3
295½	216½	Glynwed	291½	+ 11	5.8	11.4
134½	32½	Haden MacLn	134		2.9	
230	185	Hadleigh	192½	- 2½	4.5	9.1
280	180	Hall Eng	238	+ 4	4.5	
126½	99½	Halma	120		2.6	16.3
73½	64½	Hampson Ind	66		4.6	13.9
52½	32½	Hay (Norman)	49	- 2½	2.6	
54½	40½	Headway†	44½		4.5	6.0
68½	42½	Hill & Smith	58½		9.0	14.8
104½	65½	How Gp	89½		3.5	
243½	210½	Hunting†	241½		3.8	12.4
461½	378	IMI	454½		3.1	14.5
624½	467½	Johnson Matth	592½	- 15	2.7	14.4
28½	23½	Jones Stroud	24½		7.7	10.1
430	390	Kelsey Ind	392½		8.9	6.8
385	299½	Lincat†	370		3.6	11.7
32½	24½	Locker (T)	29½	- ½	4.9	9.3
22½	16½	MS Intl	19½	- 1	3.8	
460	403½	Mang Bronze†	441½		2.8	18.3
498½	377½	McKechnie	482½	- 4	4.4	13.0
167½	157½	McLeod Russel	158		5.5	11.5
211	154½	Meggitt	193		3.1	20.4
99	82½	Melkitar	97		5.5	
14½	11½	MetalTech	14½			
175½	142½	Mcass	175	+ 2½	3.6	
357½	247½	Molins†	279½	- 1	6.8	
472½	392½	Morgan Crble	443	- 8	4.5	13.8
55½	53	Neoffseas	54		3.6	11.7
57½	49½	Polyhedron	50½		9.8	6.8
608½	182	Powerscreen	229	- 1	5.7	5.9
209½	160½	Quadramatic	164½		7.6	8.5
50	27½	Quadrant Grp	27½			
60	50	Ridrort Metal	60			
60½	42	Ransomes	59½		1.1	24.8
261½	232½	Renold	232½	- 1½	3.6	9.4
85	73	Richardson West	81		8.5	
301½	188	**Rolls-Royce**	274	+ 1½	2.7	20.4
356	269	Rotork	356	- 6	3.3	
220	140	Rabicon	202	+ 1	3.9	14.5
1200	1153½	SKF 'B'	1188½	+ 9½	3.4	
203½	139½	Senior Eng	203	+ 1	2.1	19.7
812½	461½	Smiths Ind	580		2.2	
1496	975	**Siebe†**	1249	- 27	1.2	22.3
132½	114½	Sir Hundred	128	- 2½	6.0	8.9
950½	702	**Smiths Inds†**	882	+ 7	2.8	19.7
18½	11½	Solvesa	12½		2.4	
630	542½	Spirax-Sarco†	630		2.9	16.4
326½	282½	Sterling Ind	308½	- 5½	4.2	11.2
600	424	TI†	573	+ 21	3.2	17.9
106½	89½	Tinsley (E)	93½	+ 3	8.3	8.6
87½	64½	Transtec	85½		4.0	
277½	270	Triplex Lloyd	277½		3.2	18.8
417	347½	Ultra Elect†	382	+ 3½	2.4	18.7
68	57½	Utd Inds	62½	+ 1	5.3	8.8
242½	198	Vickers†	237	+ 6½	3.8	14.8
10½	7½	Villers Grp	10½			
703	584	Vitec	701½		2.5	13.1
807½	740	Vosper Thorny	769½	+ 1	4.3	11.9
320	280	Wagon Ind	312½	- 1½	4.8	13.9
314½	222½	Weir†	272½	+ 1	4.1	12.7
172½	137½	Wellington Hldg†	167½		6.2	
49	48	Wellman	49		3.6	13.8
81½	55	Wescol	80	+ 1½	2.5	17.5
835	750	Whatman†	825	- 1½	2.3	21.6
57½	42½	Widney†	52½	+ 2½	8.3	16.4

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
148½	133	Adwest†	135	...	5.8	10.5
160	152	Airflow Stream	152½		6.6	11.0
675	617	Avon Rubber	672½		3.4	15.1
345	305	Bostrom	307½		3.0	
160	114½	Bolar	160	+ ½	2.5	17.7
312½	251½	Dennis	305		3.8	14.1
376½	277½	First Tech	375		1.3	26.3
1685	1052½	**GKN†**	1627	+ 17	1.8	20.8
4487½	3416½	General Mtr	4093½	+ 78½	3.0	...
525	414½	Hartwell†	517	+ 7	4.0	...
2326½	1991½	Honda Motor	2025½	- 85	0.4	...
480	384½	Laird	426	- 10½	3.4	11.2
258½	194	**LucasVarity**	257	+ 7	2.2	15.4
223½	158½	Mayflower	223½	+ 5	1.6	21.7
127½	85½	Sytbone	125	...	6.5	10.3
261	252½	T & N	258	...	4.5	15.0
34½	24½	Toad#	31½		...	
42½	35½	Wilsion	41	- ½	2.6	11.0

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
670	530	**All Food**	617	- 13	2.0	19.8
270	215	Acatos & Hutch†	230	- 2	6.7	24.2
37	24½	Albert Fisher	31½	+ ½	13.3	8.3
285	200	Banks (S C)	284	- 1	7.0	7.4
495	417	Barr (AG)	480		2.9	12.4
44½	34	Benson Crspt	37½	- 1	5.2	8.0
360	289	Booker	258		12.4	10.8
842½	571½	Brake Bros	842½	+ 7½	1.7	
103½	85	CPL Aromas	98½		6.1	28.4
885½	600	**Cadbury-Schwt**	880	+ 46	2.0	23.7
262	165	Carrs Milling	167		8.6	5.7
114½	70½	Cavaghan†	114½		4.0	20.2
257½	234½	Cranswick	256½		5.1	12.2
369½	253	Dairy Crest Group	335	+ 7½	3.6	15.0
379	273½	Dalgety	369	+ 15	3.3	
67	37½	Daniels St	55½		1.1	
511	375	Devro	511		2.4	21.4
129	99	Finlay (James)	124		3.6	22.8
514	404	Geest	514	+ 21½	2.5	
13½	8½	Global	11		8.3	13.6
348½	285	Greencore	336		2.5	18.5
211½	164½	Hazlewood Fds	205½	- ½	4.3	14.8
185	142	Hillsdown	179½	- 3½	6.9	10.8
64½	54½	JLI Group	62½		9.9	13.0
412	392	Linton Park	396		5.1	8.5
100	86	Matthews (B)	89½		6.2	
224½	207½	Nichols (V)	214	- 1½	4.7	
240	182	Nbn Foods	223½	+ 1½	5.5	12.8
20	16	Nrthmbn Fe	16½		1.5	8.6
112½	89½	Paramount Foods†	96½		6.7	
57	51	Pascoe's	51			56.8
147½	103½	Perkins Food	138	- 1½	3.4	14.0
83½	69½	Plant & Gen	83		2.4	
82	60	Sentry Farm	68½	+ 2	9.3	6.3
34½	23½	Sims Food	25½			2.7
567	450	Tate & Lyle	560	+ 11	3.3	15.2
151	116	Treatt†	124		6.0	13.7
738½	581½	Unigate	731½		3.5	17.6
628	346½	**Unilever**	628	+ 20	1.7	30.9
4603½	3500	Unilever (NV)	4603½	+ 212½	1.4	
280	216½	Utd Biscuits†	245	- 10	5.4	17.4
62½	44½	WT Foods	58	...	3.2	22.8

HEALTHCARE

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
442½	318½	Alloce UniChem	425	- 5½	2.7	32.7
163	135	Assoc Nursg	163	+ 3	2.9	25.7
888½	693	Bespak	882½	+ 7	1.8	25.3
525	715	Bloomtps Ind	162½	- 3½		
159½	[illegible]	Care UK	159½		1.0	18.5
88½	31	Cobis	31	- 6½	...	
516½	385½	Community Hr	515		2.9	18.8
32	26½	CrestaCare†	30½		4.1	14.5
18	7½	Endowmed	12	+ ½		
164½	122½	Ferraris Group	155		2.6	14.4
169½	144½	Gyrus	160			
171½	141	Healigh Tec	154	+ 6½	2.4	19.4
138½	97½	Innovative Tech	121½	+ 2		
95	48	Isbecare Grp	85½		5.2	45.4
589	495	Isotron†	541	- 1	1.5	19.3
191½	150	Lee Ind	191½	+ 3	1.8	25.7
241	190½	Nestor Hlth†	235	- 1½	2.1	25.2
2750	2095	Nycomed Amsht	2220	- 10	1.1	24.6
5½	3½	Premier Health#	5½			
11	6½	Regina Hlth	10½			
352	255½	Scholl†	351½	+ 8	3.1	19.4
625½	501½	Seton Health	624½	- 1½	1.6	24.4
810	607½	Shield Diag	820			
239	195½	Sleckdi Max	223	...		48.5
194	150	Smith & Neph	174	+ 6	3.6	15.7
2½	2	Tenant	2½		3.7	19.0
412½	382½	West Hillcrest	406½		2.1	18.5

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
152½	132½	Airsprung	133½		6.0	8.6
196	165½	Allott	191		4.0	10.8
65	55	Albion	67		8.2	7.0
140½	128½	Alexandra W	137½		5.9	12.8
187½	124	Allied Textile	163½		6.5	10.7
18½	13½	Amsport	13½		6.9	33.5
205	157	BLP Group	182½	+ 2½	6.3	
285½	206	Baird (Wm)	280	- 1½	4.7	14.1
53½	50	Bilston Batsea	52½		3.6	27.2
149½	97½	Black Arrow	119½		4.5	9.8
421½	391½	Black (Peter)†	412½		1.9	19.3
94½	76	British Mohair	86	- 2	5.8	
88½	47½	Claremont Garments	56½	- ½	18.0	
100	81½	Coats Viyella	94	+ ½	5.1	33.4
182½	146	Cornwell Pltz Sp	160		2.6	12.7
368	313	Courtaulds Text	344	- 1	5.6	13.2
33½	25½	Creighton	27½			
13½	7½	Dalyan	8½		10.3	
68½	48	Dawson†	51½	- ½	8.7	7.5
157½	143½	Denby Group	145½		3.9	10.8
267½	230	Dewhurst	256	- 3	2.3	16.6
23	17	Dixon Hart	22½		9.3	
27	16½	Drummond Group	18½		13.5	4.9
122½	107½	Eclipse Blinds	116½	+ 1	3.9	
42	29	Ellord	33½		4.8	6.5
131½	100	FII Group†	100		5.0	7.6
34	30½	Faupel Trading	31½		8.7	6.4
10½	4	Foster (J)	4½	- ½		
44½	39	French	40		4.9	
502½	377½	Gaskell	461½		2.3	
78½	62	Haggas (J)†	64½		8.7	12.5
11½	8½	Hartstone Group	10½		5.7	28.0
257½	226½	Hicking Pentecost	238½	- 2	4.0	13.4
4	2½	Hollic Group	3½			
18½	10½	Honeysuckle Group	14½			
84	62½	Horace Small	78½	- 2½		
330	260	IMP Intl	325	- 5	1.9	14.5
25½	12½	Jacques Vert	12½			
50½	37½	Jerome (S) & Sons	44		8.9	10.7
320	290	Jones Stroud†	298½		4.7	12.7
59½	47½	Jourdan (T)	59	+ 1½	3.2	
134	97	Kenwood App	104	- 2½	...	
245	200	Lambert Howarth†	222½		4.8	9.9
152	135	Lamont Hldgs	139		12.3	9.1
123	100	Leeds Group	100	- 1	8.8	6.3
17	8½	Leslie Wise	16	+ ½	12.1	
16	12½	Lionheart	15½		3.2	12.5
90	68	Lyles (S)	88½		3.8	8.9
210	173	McIntie	210		4.3	15.1
132½	103½	Mayborn	120½	+ 3	8.7	8.1
575	550	Osborne & Little	560		4.7	11.1
3½	2½	PEX Group▲	4½	+ ½		7.8
126	62½	Parkland Group†	62½	- 4	8.4	
475	435	Paterson Zch	462½		4.7	10.3
420	375	Paterson Zch 'A'†	412½		5.3	9.1
139	109½	Peniland Group	120		3.9	16.8
210	185	Pifco	205		4.0	10.4
203	185	Pifco 'A' Vtg†	192		4.2	9.7
60½	49½	Pitards	51		9.0	
43½	38	Readicut Int	41½		7.7	12.2
1250	852	**Reckitt Colman**	1225	+ 50	2.0	21.9
595	430½	Reyvent	580		3.1	18.7
35	25½	Richards	26½		9.4	
214½	174½	Royal Doulton†	199	+ ½	6.3	
32½	20½	SEET	30			
45½	29½	Sherwood Group	41½		11.5	
110½	89½	Shiloh	90½		5.5	6.3
285	255	Silentnight	265		4.9	11.5
70½	52½	Sirdar	69½		10.3	9.6
41½	32½	Stirling Group	36½	+ ½	8.0	8.6
16½	8	Stoddard	8½		10.7	19.1
282½	209½	Stewart	210	- 1½	3.6	13.7
278½	211½	Swallowfield	263½		3.9	
206½	155	Tomkinsons	194		7.8	10.0
9½	3½	UK Safety	3½	- ½		
142	134	Usher (F)†	137		10.0	7.0
80	70	Victoria	71		4.4	11.3
150	117½	Vymura†	147½	- 5½	4.6	
58½	40	Walker Greenbk	41		11.3	8.5
100½	80	Wiford Wepadr	95	+ ½	1.7	
67½	60½	Wolsom	64½		9.7	5.6
195	195	Wood (Arthur)	195		4.5	12.9
140	94	Yorklyde	94	- 1	6.8	

INSURANCE

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
3859½	3250	Am Gen	3843½	- 21½	2.4	
129	108	Angerstein	127½		10.3	9.9
64½	53½	Brascod	60		11.9	8.0
1364	1102½	Britannic	1265	- 6½	3.3	8.5
158½	129	CLM Insce	158½	+ 1½	8.7	12.4
275½	262½	Charles Taylor	273½		2.1	30.3
1237	702	**Cm Union**	1227	+ 27	2.6	23.6
355½	237	Cp Insce	355		1.0	26.3
550	495	Dom & Genl	540		2.3	19.9
158½	112	Euclidian	158½	+ 5	11.8	19.7
435	203	FBD IE	435	- 7	2.1	
162	146½	Fenchurch	161½		10.3	12.7
1565	897	**Gen Accident**	1545	- 30	3.1	10.5
495	325	**GRE†**	430	- 1	2.7	6.6
632	441½	Hibernian IE	632	+ 19	1.6	
206	187	Husco	200		1.9	34.0
155	143	Hiscox Select	155		2.3	13.4
1800	1145	Independent	1745	+ 20	1.2	17.3
570½	342½	Irish Life†	569½	+ 8	2.4	
187	151½	Jardine Lloyd Tn	174	+ 2½	7.4	
142½	107	Kiln Capital	142½		2.5	48.1
116½	100½	Lambert Fen	110		9.5	7.8
785	532	**Legal & Genl**	747	+ 7	2.1	19.0
2140½	1421½	Liberty Lfe†	2093½	- 12½	1.8	28.8
184½	145	Lmd	183		4.3	11.1
627½	499½	London & Man	576½	- 3½	5.5	23.0
5481½	4321½	Marsh McLn	5348½	- 71½	2.3	
112	100	Mashcad	109	- 1½	16.1	
87	81	New London Cap	83		9.0	12.2
556	385	**Norwich Union**	463	- 3	3.2	18.0
131½	102½	Ockham	129½	- 1	4.4	
110½	81½	Orion	87½	- 5	8.2	51.7
135	117	Premium Trust	133½		3.7	27.2
1000	720	**Prudential†**	899	- 20	2.1	21.2
20	17½	PWS†	20		4.7	4.4
825	590	**Royal & Sun All**	776	+ 5½	2.9	19.6
292½	167½	St James Place†	288½	+ 1	0.6	33.9
169½	132	Sedgwick†	158½		4.2	13.3
29	22½	Steel Burrill†	26	- ½	7.2	
645	434½	**Sun Life & P**	562½	- 35½	2.6	32.1
136	110	Syndicate Capt	133		8.7	10.4
625	521½	Utd Assurance	594½	+ 8	4.5	13.6
169½	147½	Wellington	160	- ½	3.6	11.0
166	126½	Willis Corroon	165	+ ½	5.0	13.3
16	11½	Windsor†	14½		5.2	..

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
610	490	3i	589	- 11	2.0	34.4
65	51½	Aberdeen Emg Ec	62½	- 1½	...	
123½	96½	Aberdeen High Inc	123½	...	6.8	18.3
133	84	Aberdn New Dawn	115	- 1½	1.8	46.7
237	206½	Abrdn Smlr	234½	+ ½	3.8	26.1
139½	116	Aberforth Sm Wts	139			
3022½	2466	Alliance†	2955	+ 21½	2.5	45.3
700½	584	Anglo & O'seas†	696½	+ 5	1.9	62.7
74½	67½	Aust Opps	69½		0.4	
67	50½	Baillie Gifford SN	51½			
289½	239½	Bankers	286	+ 1	2.4	46.4
110½	85½	Baring Em Eu	108½	-	...	
591½	468½	Baring Tribne†	591½	+ 2½	1.7	65.4
138½	114½	Br Assets†	138½	+ 1½	4.4	25.8
122	106	Br Empire Sec	121½	+ ½	1.1	65.9
61½	52½	Brazilian	61½	+ ½		
371½	313	Brunner	370	+ 1	2.2	58.1
110	110	BZW Conv#	110		8.9	
99½	74½	Caledonia Dem	86½	+ 2	1.3	
987½	737½	Candover	878	+ 4	2.9	
68½	58½	Central Euro Gwth	64	- ½		
470½	364	Ctrl Euro†	468½	+ 2½	1.6	
190	168	City Merch Hi†	188½	+ 1	6.1	15.5
279½	230	City Of Lon	279½	+ 1	3.0	28.4
338	234	Cont Assets	336	+ 4	0.7	...
77½	74½	Dartmr Inv Inc	75½		13.7	9.7
635	530	Derby Cap	632½	+ 2½	...	
139½	127½	Derby Inc	130		18.8	4.8
220½	174½	Dunedin Inc Gt	211	+ ½	3.6	33.4
407	335½	Dunedin Smlr	407	+ 6	3.1	34.6
213½	178	Dunedin Wwde	213½	+ 2½	1.2	
292½	245	EFM	281	- 2½	0.2	...
60½	43	Edin Dragon	54½	- 1½	...	
29½	24½	Edinburgh Inca	29½	-	...	
519	413½	Edinburgh IT	512½	+ 4	2.7	40.8
105	81½	Edin Japan	83	+ 1		
514½	424½	Edin US Tkt	514	+ 8	0.9	
605½	527	Electra Inv	605½	+ 3	2.0	42.7
185½	157	Eng & Scot	185½	+ 1½	2.3	40.3
29½	25½	Enl Cap	27½			
510	374	European Asset†	509	+ 9	0.9	
70½	47½	Fidelity Asian Val	62½	- 1½		
343½	277½	Fidelity Euro Val	343	+ 6	0.2	
32½	25	Fidelity Jap Val	26½	+	...	
158	136½	Fidelity Spec Val	157½	+ ½	1.0	78.6
250½	217½	Finsbury 'A'	250½		1.9	68.2
223	173	Finsbury Groth	213½	- ½	2.0	59.8
155½	130	Five Arr Chile	149½	+ 1½	1.6	77.2
18½	2½	Five Arr Wts	3½			
635½	513½	Fleming Amert	634½	+ 9	0.4	
64	44½	Fleming Asian	57½	- 1		
12½	6½	Fleming Asian Wts	10	- ½		
64½	44½	Fleming Chinese	57½	- 2½		
27½	14	Fleming Ch Wts	19½	- 1½		
507½	401½	Fleming Claver	498½	- ½	1.7	67.7
629	471	Fleming Cont	629	+ 11	0.8	
129	100½	Fleming Em Mkts	124½	- ½	0.4	
351	271	Fleming Entpr	350½	+ 3	1.9	52.2
476½	371½	Fleming Fledgt	476	+ 4	0.3	
405½	307	Flem Grd Gth Ord	404½	+ 1½	0.8	
161½	152	Flem Grd Gth Pf	161	+ ½	10.7	
129½	103	Fleming Inc Cap	129½	+ ½	5.6	24.6
111½	105½	Fleming Ing Inct	107½		11.5	9.9
346½	246½	Fleming Ing Cap	346½	+ 4		
47	39½	Fleming Indian	46½	+ 1½		
12½	8½	Fleming In Wts	10½			
167½	131	Fleming Japan	134½	+ 2		
439	364½	Fleming Merc	439	+ 2	2.9	
83½	70½	Fleming Nat Res	81½	- ½	0.3	
413½	350½	Fleming Oseas	404	+ 5	1.4	
180	148½	Fleming Smllr Co	179½	+ 2½	3.1	52.2
203½	168	Foreign & Colt	199½	+ 2½	1.4	
123½	97	F&C Inc Gwh	116½	+ ½	3.9	32.4
107½	83½	F&C Emg Mkts	97	- 2½		
266½	185	F&C Enterprise†	254		1.9	55.0
476½	361½	F&C Eurotst	476	+ 5½	0.3	
195	150½	F&C German	194½	+ 1½	0.4	
131	99½	F&C Pacific	112½	- 1½	2.1	53.8
178½	144½	F&C PEP	178½		3.2	38.0
203½	177	F&C Smaller	203½	+ ½	1.7	59.4
170½	144½	F&C US Smlr	170½	+ 2½		
64½	60½	Fornan Inc†	63½		10.2	
153½	109½	Franklin Cap	153	+ 3		
265½	133½	Framl Dual Cp	264½	+ 3½		
58½	38½	Fulcrum Cap	58½	+ ½		
22½	17½	Fulcrum Inc	18½		64.6	2.0
191½	188	Fulcrum Zero	190½			
315	270½	Gartmore Brit	315	+ 3½	3.6	
321½	242½	Gartmore Euro	321	+ 9	0.6	
150½	110	Gartmore Sted	150½	...	7.8	15.6
431½	345½	G'more Smlr Cos	431	+ 1½	1.7	63.4
74½	52½	Geared Inc Ord	74½	- ½	8.2	9.5
58½	51½	Geared Inc Inc	56½		10.8	7.3
103	59½	Gov Asn Sm Cos	89½	- 1	0.8	
90½	70½	Gov Emg Mts	86½	- 2	0.6	
183½	151½	Govett Am Smlr	182½	+ 3½		
96½	81½	Govett High Inct	96½	+ 1½	7.3	16.6
108½	80½	Govett Oriental	85½	- 1½	0.9	
463	379½	Govett Strategic	463	+ 4	2.0	43.8
31½	18½	Gresham House	29		1.1	7.7
146½	119	GT Inc Growth	143½		2.9	49.3
180½	136½	GT Japan	137½	- ½	0.4	
148½	114½	Gum Fl Eq Inct	148	+ ½	7.0	
75½	61	Henderson Am Cp	75½	+ ½		
120½	116½	Henderson Am In	118		8.3	15.4
43½	29	Henderson Am Wt	43			
350½	281½	Hend Elec Gen	342½	- ½	1.4	79.7
132½	101	Hend Far East	101½	- 3½	8.4	14.5
577½	452	Hend Gnmr	570		1.7	71.5
172	151½	Hend High Inct	168½		5.0	23.0
42½	30½	Hend Jap Smlr	33½			
276½	219	Hend Smlr	276½	+ 1	1.8	66.6
615½	495	Hend Strata	615½	+ 5	0.1	
69½	51	Hend TR Pact	56½	- 1½	0.6	
117½	88½	Hend Tech	114½			
181½	135½	Herald†	181	+ 1	0.6	
124½	105½	High Income Tt	118½		7.2	14.9
162	140	H Govett Smlr	161½		2.3	57.2
176½	139½	I&S UK Smlr	176	+ 1	2.1	70.4
213½	180	Inv Cap	213½	+ 2½	3.4	32.2
97	67½	Int Biotech	72½	+ 2		
20	7½	Int Biotec Wts	8½	+ ½		
78	70	Int Biotec C	75	+ 2½		
59½	38	INVESCO Asia	50½	- 1	1.6	61.7
98½	75½	INVESCO Bluet	92½		17.3	10.9
210½	175½	INVESCO Eng Int	210	+ 2	0.8	
36½	35½	INVESCO Jap Dis	25½		...	...
49½	39	INVESCO Korea	39½	- 2	...	
33½	22½	INVESCO Tokyo	24½	- ½		
107½	83½	JF Fledg Jap	83½	- 1		
178	135	J Fry Euro Ut	178	+ 7	3.9	
107	65½	J Fry Ukr▼	107	+ ½	6.6	
88½	79½	J Fry Utl Inct	88½		7.9	
147½	121½	Jupiter Ex Inc	147½	+ ½	6.7	18.7
36½	18½	Jupiter Ex IncWt	36½	+ 1		
104	91	Jupiter Gro Cap	103½	+ 1½	9.7	12.8
50	44	Jupiter Gro Pfd	50	+ ½		
150½	135½	Jupiter Intl Grt	150	+ 2½	3.4	
98½	73½	Kimd E Mkt	94½	- ½		
174½	164½	Klmrt End	174	+ 1		
156	118	Klmrt H Inc	155	+ ½	9.4	15.7
218½	170½	Klmrt Smlrt	218½	+ 1	1.5	
201½	89	Korea—Euro	179½	+ 1	0.7	
132	113	Latin American	126½	+ ½		
1287	1077½	Law Debenture†	1268½	+ 6½	2.8	35.2
120	113½	Lite Off Opp	135			
149½	124½	Lloyds Sm Cap	149½			
22	17½	Lloyds Sm Dwt	18½		29.0	
168	143	Lloyds Sm Pkgt	167½		3.2	
206½	173½	Lon St Lawrence	206½	+ 1	4.0	31.5
414½	341½	Lowland	413		3.5	35.4
812½	797½	M&G 2nd Dual Cap	800			
51½	50	M&G 2nd Dual Inc	49			1.6
98	75½	M&G Inc Geared†	98	+ 2	7.7	17.6
73½	54	M&G Inc Inv Tst Cp	73½	+		
26½	22½	M&G Inc Inv Tst Inct	23½			3.9
182	150½	M&G Inc Package†	181½	+ 1½	4.1	32.5
80	77½	M&G Inc Zero Div	78½			
66	31	M&G Rec Cap	65½	+ 1½		
91½	53½	M&G Rec Geared†	91	+ 2	7.4	17.5
33	22½	M&G Rec Inct	25½		26.7	4.8
196½	160	M&G Rec Pacget	196½	+ ½	3.4	37.7
111½	108½	M&G Rec Zero Div	110			
209	160½	M Curne Euro	209	+ 1½	0.5	
84½	64½	M Curne Japan	65½	- 1½		
125½	100½	M Curne Pac	104½	- 2	2.3	
349½	292½	Majedie	349	+ ½	2.5	53.0
432	356	Merchants	423½	+ 3½	4.2	
162½	132	Mercury Euro Pv	162½	+ 2½	1.7	46.8
78½	50½	Mercury Eur Wt	78½	+ 3½		
67	57½	Mercury World†	65½	+ ½	1.6	71.4
	...	Mercury Wld Wts				
806	677½	Monks Inv Tst	806	+ 8½	1.5	65.3
200½	180	Morg Gren Inc	197½		4.3	27.7
95	80½	Morg Wts	93			
82	70	Morg Lats Amer	76½	- ½	0.5	
33½	22½	Morg Wts	29½			
128½	119½	Murray Ent	127½	...	3.0	43.7
22½	18	Murray Ent Wts	21½			
69½	53½	Murray Emg Eco	69½	- ½	1.8	
11½	7½	Murray Eco Ec Wt	8½			
529½	448	Murray Incmet	528½	+ 2	3.5	37.8
494½	431½	Murray Intl	494½	+ 4	3.6	32.5
208½	205½	Murray S/C DP	208½			
380	270	Murray S/C Cap	377½	+ 1½		
84½	58½	Murray S/C Inct	60	- ½	25.3	4.8
5250	4350	Murray S/C Ulst	4975		3.1	
427½	340	Murray Small	418½	+ 3½	1.8	53.9
406½	379½	Murray Vest	388		4.9	23.2
289	271½	Natwest Entt	287½	+ 1	2.2	44.3
5½	2½	Nowmarket	2½			
36½	34½	Pacific Assets	47½	- 1	1.1	
115½	83	Perpetual Euro	115	+ 1	0.5	
156½	125	Perp Inc Gth	150½	+ 1	3.2	45.0
37	27½	Perpetual Jap	28	- ½		
377½	322½	Perpl UK Sml Cot	376½		2.3	48.1
£200½	£168	Personal Assets	£200	+ 100	1.5	
148½	130½	Prolific Inc	147	+ 1	3.7	31.2
337	270	RIT Cap Ptnr	337	+ 3	0.7	
545½	516½	Robeco	522½	+ 3½	2.0	
553	524	Rolinco	529½	+ 3½	0.8	
59½	37½	Schrd Asia Pac	52½	- 1	1.2	
70½	56½	Schrod Emg Cal	66½			
165½	142	Schrod Inc Gwth	165	+ 1	3.6	29.5
61½	48	Schrod Jap Gwth	48½	- 1½		
282½	152	Schrod Korea	195½	- 29		
79	43½	Schrod Split Cap	79	+ 3		
135	114½	Schrod Split Inc	135	+ 3½	8.1	
160	154½	Schrod Split Zero	155½			
174½	142	Schrod UK Gwth	171		2.5	46.2
181½	165½	Schrod Vent Intl	179½		1.2	
379½	311	Scot	373	+ 1	2.1	59.3
237	183½	Scot Amescan†	232½	+ 2	2.9	40.5
144½	91½	Scot Asian	133½	- 1½		
134½	110½	Scot Eastern	133½	+ ½	1.9	
390	316½	Scot Mtge	385½	+ ½	1.7	56.5
104	100½	Scot Natl Tst	103		10.1	10.8
140½	119½	Scot Value	139½		1.8	29.2
2658½	2168½	Second Alliance	2608½	+ 6	2.6	48.8
130½	112½	Secs Tst of Scot	130½	+ 1½	3.6	36.3
185	149½	Shires Smlr	184½	+ ½	4.2	23.1
164½	133½	Smaller Cost	162	- ½	2.5	
385	353	St Andrew Inv†	376½	...	3.3	38.8
602	484	Temple Bar	587		4.1	29.8
96½	82½	Throgmorton	96½	+ ½	3.0	42.6
128½	102½	Tpton Emg Mkt	122½	- 1½	1.1	71.6
226	167½	TR Euro Growth	225½	+ 4½	0.5	
48½	44½	TR Property	48½		2.7	33.9
412½	374	TR Tech Inv	407½	+ ½	11.7	32.6
333½	273	Tolley Trust	287		1.6	59.8
158	145½	Undervalued Ast	157½	+ ½	1.9	69.7
162½	152	Value Inc Tst	160½	+ ½	3.7	33.4
139	102½	Value Real	129½	+ 1	0.8	65.0
51	40½	Warrants & Val	50½			
103½	87½	Wigmore	102	...	1.0	
385½	310½	Witan	377½	+ 1	2.3	46.6
74½	66½	Yeoman Inct	68½	+ ½	4.1	4.4

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LEISURE & HOTELS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
29½	11	ABI Leis#	13½			15.1
512½	405½	Airtours	492½	- 7	1.7	24.8
30	23½	Ald Leis	27½		4.7	8.5
60½	54½	Arcadian	60½	..	2.5	25.2
21	16	Arena Leis	18½			
155	120	BS Group	120		6.8	
130	110	Baldwin†	130		3.8	
120	82	Bluebird Toys	111		10.8	
800	587½	Boosey Hwks	680		1.8	25.5
33½	27½	Burndene	28½	- 1	8.7	7.5
159½	106½	Capital Corpn	111½	- 3	5.9	
83½	55	Clivedon†	73½	- 10	3.4	16.7
109½	70½	Clubhaus	101½	- 5		
286	223	Eurocamp†	284		5.5	11.9
95	67	Euro Disney	92½			
138½	128½	Euro Leisure†	122½		4.3	7.8
173½	100	First Choice	157½		2.2	54.8
340	269½	First Leisure†	333½		3.4	19.0
145½	110½	Friendly Hotels	142½		5.3	
1172	837	**Granada**	1083	+ 24	1.7	22.3
47½	37½	Hi-Tec Sports†	41½	+ ½	6.0	8.0
289	207½	Holmes Place†	273½	+ 1	1.4	
282½	165½	Hornby	218½		3.7	10.6
370	310	Hozelock	339		4.2	18.0
178	148	Jarvis Hotels	172		3.3	11.0
525½	351½	Jurys Hotel	517½	+ 7½	1.6	24.8
35	24½	Kunick	32		3.0	16.5
370	250	**Ladbroke†**	336	- 2½	2.6	24.5
328½	188	London Clubs	188½	- 5	5.5	13.6
236½	182½	Macdonald Htls	236½	- 3	2.5	17.7
161½	132½	Man Utd	132½	- 1	1.5	21.2
58½	34½	Mandarin Orntl	48½	+ ½	4.5	
559	418½	Millennium & Copt	554½		1.9	21.4
1½	1	Mitchell Hldgs				
102½	77½	Newcastle Utd†	92½	- 1	2.2	10.0
600	400½	Nortrem	587	+ 1	1.7	35.7
74½	61½	Pizza Leisure	67½		13.5	4.3
25½	19½	Queensborough	25		2.0	
26	12½	Queens Moat	25½			5.6
420	283½	**Rank Grp†**	397	- 1	5.7	15.4
49	38½	Regal Hotel†	45		3.5	
75½	50½	Ryan Hotels IE	69½		3.1	14.6
1900	1175	Savoy Hotel 'A'†	1570	- 17½	1.7	25.7
51½	32½	Shellield United	38½	+ ½		
252½	232½	Sinclair (Wm)†	248½	+ 1½	4.6	11.9
88	63½	Southampton	71		1.8	
122	91	Stakis†	118	- 1	2.6	18.0
276	250½	Stanley Leisure	255½	- 1	2.1	18.0
8	4	Tandem	6½	- ½		
346	346	Tangrpg	346		1.4	
194	157	Tussauds Hotels	182½	- 1½	2.9	14.7
78½	59½	Tottenham Hot	68		1.8	17.9
201½	135½	Vardon†	188½	- 1½	1.6	22.8
395	302½	Wembley†	362½		1.0	9.0
158½	130	Zetters Gp	139½	..	9.6	7.9

MEDIA

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
405	324	Abbott Mead	390		2.1	
179½	145½	Adscene†	170		6.2	17.8
87½	64½	Aegis Gp	85	- 1½	0.6	22.7
152½	70	Aspen Grp	146½	- 6	2.1	
195	152½	Atlantic Telecom	187½	- 1		
79½	50½	BBD Design	67½	- 6		
225	185	Barbour Index†	205		6.2	23.5
2	1½	Birkdale	1½			
385	320	Black (A&C)	385		4.7	
364½	267½	Border TV	364½		2.4	28.0
470	410	Bristol	467½		4.3	16.0
268½	129½	Bull Aircraft	248½	+ 9	1.0	35.8
594	213	**BSkyB†**	446½	- 6½	1.7	27.1
215	163½	CIA Gp	215	+ 3½	1.6	
746½	497	Capital Radio	710	+ 4	2.4	22.0
561	408	**Carlton Comm†**	460	- 3	3.4	13.2
267½	145	Chancery Grp	246½	- 3½	2.3	16.3
742½	602½	Chrysalis†	715		0.5	
84½	77	City of Lon	84½		9.7	10.9
137	88	Cordiant Comms	134½	- 1½	0.9	
169	143½	Creative Pub	168½		5.2	58.6
2500	2084½	Daily Mail	2437½		1.2	28.4
2481½	2000	Daily Mail 'A'	2387½		1.2	27.9
188½	129½	Dialog	166½			
247	203	Dorling Kind	223½	- 1	2.5	61.3
415	265½	Dudley Jenkins	405	- 5	1.6	28.0
1150	905	EMAP	1150	+ 3	1.5	27.0
685	420	**EMI**	500	- 3	3.3	69.2
1117½	976½	Elsevier	987	+ 6½	2.5	36.8
2247½	1495	Euromoney Pb	2225½		2.8	24.1
66	50½	Facia	65½		1.4	
555	481	Flextech	527½			
206½	117½	Gt Group	201		4.0	30.8
192½	155½	GWR Gp	179½	- 1	2.0	34.0
395	247½	Gearmaster Group	250		3.6	12.6
49½	34½	Goodhead	49		1.3	16.1
435	290	HIT Enter	482½		0.2	74.1
287½	262½	Haynes Pubn	285		5.0	12.0
13½	9½	Highbury Hse	11½			
242	204	Hodder H'line	241	+ 3½	3.8	
485	400	Home Counts	445		1.6	43.2
412	365	IBC	410½		3.0	14.3
80	70½	ITE Group	77½	+ 2		
29½	18½	Incentive	22½			13.6
387½	327½	Independent	362½		2.2	
162	125	Interoute	125		4.7	9.1
235½	196½	Johnston Press	230½	- 1	1.6	17.8
44½	30	Lopex	37½	- ½	3.4	7.9
446½	305	Maxdon	432½		1.8	
38½	23½	MediaKey†	32	- ½	5.4	12.0
1055	940	Metal Bulletin	1050		2.7	26.5
212½	209½	Michael Inc	210½		2.7	21.9
213½	170	Mirror Grp	133½		3.2	12.4
1190	713	Mise Grp	1187½	- 2½	1.1	
427½	333	News Corp	416½	+ 11	0.3	18.0
360½	292½	News Corp Pref	365½	+ 12½	0.8	
306	252½	Newsquest	306	+ 6½	2.2	17.2
15½	11½	Osprey Comms	13			
1073	705	**Pearson†**	960	- 27	2.5	27.5
55½	34½	Phoenix	42½			
902½	867½	Portsmouth Sund	892½		2.1	18.3
75	51½	Quarto	67½		8.3	9.2
730	578	**Reed Intl†**	626	+ 15	2.9	30.6
745	509½	**Reuters†**	649		2.5	24.2
173½	100½	Saatchi	167	- 5½	0.9	
748½	651	Scot Med	747½		3.8	17.5
462	375	Scott Radio	462		2.5	20.1
54½	40½	Standwick†	43½		4.2	10.3
13½	6½	Sleepy Kids	10		1.1	
550	448	Southnews	550	+ 1½	1.9	18.9
22½	17½	Sterling Pub	19	...		4.3
114½	85½	Taylor Nelson	108½		1.2	
223	204	Television Cpt	217½		2.2	15.4
1920	1549½	Thomson Corp	1835½	- 14½	2.5	28.8
573	483½	Trinity Intl†	548	- 1	3.0	17.4
245	227	Ulster TV	230		3.1	
831	630	**United News†**	798	- 5	3.0	17.4
115½	84½	VCI†	101½	- 3	9.7	7.5
105	75½	VTR	103½		5.7	10.9
354	240	WPP	348	- 2	0.6	22.1
159½	123½	Wilmington	159		0.9	35.2

MINING

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
2959½	2290½	Ang Am Coal	2625½	+ 50	6.3	6.1
2975	1975	Ang Am	2943½	- 16½	2.8	
2716½	2068½	Ang Am Gold	2593½	- 31½	6.1	
971½	643½	Anglo Am Plat	925	+ 6½	2.8	25.1
2931½	2040½	Anglogold	2528½	- 40½	8.4	
22½	16½	Anglo Pac Grp	16½			
31½	23½	Ascon Intl	24			
588	411½	Ashanti†	575½	+ 27	2.1	
66½	49½	Ashton	49½		11.4	
112	47	Avocet	53½	+ 5		
185	133½	Billiton†	165½		3.6	17.3
34½	31½	Bolcks	33½		3.5	
20½	15	Bougainville	15	- 1		
299½	222½	Central Pacific	257½	- 3½		
41	21½	Cons Murchison	40½	+ 1½	1.2	
1393½	1062½	De Beers	1387½	+ 71½	4.1	14.2
423½	337½	Driefontein	394½	+ 9½	3.2	12.6
189½	88	Durban	150	+ 9½		
87½	57½	E Rand Gold	71½	+ 6	23.3	3.1
13½	10½	E Rand Prop	12	+ ½		20.3
236	128½	Elandsrand	236	+ 34	7.3	
273½	219½	Eng China Clt	234½	- 3	6.9	10.9
126½	92	Evander	106½	+ 4	14.6	
307½	92	FS Cons	304½	+ 26½	12.4	8.1
22½	17	FS Dev	21	- 1½		
331½	734½	GFSA	859	+ 40½	3.2	17.4
121½	85½	Gencor	121½		3.2	7.8
135½	98½	Gold Fields Prop	131½	+ ½	5.9	14.1
22½	14½	Greenwich R 'A'	22½	+ 1½		
57	31½	Gwalia Cons	53½	+ 1½	1.5	9.4
231½	112½	Harmony	231½	+ 26½	7.3	
681½	443½	Impala Plat	681½	+ 16½	2.5	13.6
13½	9½	Kenmare Res	10½			
22	14	Kidson	15			
11½	7	Mediatlonz	7½	+ ½		
39	29	MIM	36	+ 1	2.7	
1087½	900	Minorco†	987½	+ 12½	3.9	
105	65	Montagle	100		4.8	
73½	53	Nomansky	65½	+ 1½	3.6	13.8
177½	152½	North	161½	+ 3½	3.2	22.4
60	22½	Petaling Tin	37½	- 5	1.3	
111	64½	RGC	72½	+ ½	5.5	3.7
142½	80	RJB	112½	+ 5½	24.4	1.4
29½	24½	Rackwood	26½		17.0	
137½	77½	Randfontein	134½	+ 21½	4.4	14.1
121½	80	Rawlon Mng	97½			
894	641	**Rio Tinto†**	801	- 2	4.0	15.1
837½	666½	Rio Tinto Ltd	783	- 7½	3.5	18.8
7	4	St Barbara	5½	+ ½		
191	128	St Helena	146½	+ 3½	22.0	2.1
192½	138½	Sons Gwalia	173½	+ 4½	5.9	12.2
130½	100½	Sibern Pacific	103½	- ½		
1153½	793½	Southvaal	1050	+ 81½	9.5	10.5
228½	177½	WMC†	201½	- ½	2.4	25.0
27	12½	Wankie Col Z	12½	- 4½	9.0	4.3
67½	40½	Water Hall	41½			
443	385	Watts Blake	387½		5.2	13.6
1396½	975	Western Deep	1396½	+ 121½	5.6	9.4
149	109½	Zambia Copper	137½	+ ½		

OIL & GAS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
205½	155½	Abbot Group	201½		1.3	32.4
32½	20½	Alliance Res	24			
64½	54	Aminex	63½			
77	63½	Ass Oil & Gas	66½	+ ½		
27½	9½	Arna Pet	13½	+ 4		
430	298½	Br Borneo	337½	- 6	1.0	
343	265	BG	311	- 2½	3.3	26.5
959	708½	**Br Petroleum†**	879½	- 3½	3.1	19.5
1½	1	Bula Resources	1			
1268	895	Burmah Castrl	1257	+ 12	3.3	18.3
496½	392½	Cairn Energy	405	- 4		
119	89	**Centrica**	113½	- 2		
14½	11	Copies Res	11½	- ½		
22½	19½	Dana Pet	21½			
72½	55	Dragon Oil	59½	- 3½		
28½	19½	Edin Oil & Gs	20	- ½	1.9	14.3
10	5½	Emerald Energy	6			
598½	510	Enterprise†	527	- 3	4.1	27.5
14½	11	Fortune	11½			43.2
300½	241½	Hardy Oil	273½		0.5	
47½	33½	JKX Oil & Gas	35	- 1½		
385	300½	KBC Adv Tech	375	..	1.1	33.2
300	240	LASMO	265	- 9	0.9	70.5
42½	35½	Lasmo Unit†	39			21.6
62½	53½	Monument	59½	- 1½		
2990½	2612½	Norsk Hydro	2912½	+ 18½	1.9	9.6
12½	97	Oil Search	110	- 3½		
58½	41½	Petroz	42½	+	2.9	8.2
54½	38½	Premier	38½			
58	54	Pittencrieff Rs	34½	-		
414	331	Ranger	392½	- 2½	4.9	7.0
3540½	3031½	Royal Dutch Fl	3540½	+ 45½	2.6	
4678½	3996½	Schlumberger	4875	+ 3½	1.0	
398½	385	**Shell**	351½	+ 2½	3.2	25.1
370½	277	SOCO Intl	292½			
7366½	5843½	Total	7366½	+ 81½	1.7	
332½	242½	XCL	247½	+ 5		

OTHER FINANCIAL

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
115½	87½	Aberdeen Asset	114		4.1	34.3
700	457	**AMVESCAP†**	663	+ 1	1.1	29.3
194	120½	BWD†	185	...	5.1	16.7
55½	45½	Berry Bcb Nbl	50½		7.4	12.5
294	262	Brokers Inv	263			
369½	245½	Brown Dolphin†	355		3.3	17.3
885	725	Caledonia	885	+ ½	2.7	23.6
4050	2800	Camellia	4000	- 50	1.1	16.9
652½	398½	Cattles	652½	+ 4½	1.9	32.5
44½	37½	Christie	39½	- 1	3.2	12.9
790	526½	Close Bros†	790	+ 6	2.1	22.7
542½	433	ERM	530		6.1	
32½	20	Exco	25		3.8	
33½	19½	Fishers Inv	31½	- ½	2.6	
219½	197	Friends Ivory Sime	218½		4.3	
409	332	Gerrard	395	+ 1	5.1	17.7
286	247½	Hambros	280	+ 1½	3.3	36.9
1705	1425	Henderson	1627½		3.6	22.5
194½	148½	Hitachi Cred	194½	+ 1	2.8	17.9
175	145	Investment Co	175		2.5	
177½	136½	Jardine Strat	154½	- 6½	6.9	
159½	111½	Johnson Fry†	156½	+ 1	3.2	
620	585	Leopard J	585	- 2½	4.3	25.7
617½	462½	Liberty Intl†	602½	- 7½	3.7	26.4
476½	343½	Lon Forfaitgt	441½	+ 3	3.5	14.7
217½	169½	London Pacific†	199		8.8	
160	110½	Lon Scot Bt	151½		2.8	26.8
263½	232½	Man ED & F	251½	+ 1	5.5	10.1
1820	1407½	M & G	1920	+ 72½	2.7	29.4
222½	182½	Paragon▲	221	- ½	1.5	9.4
3852½	2682½	Perpetual	3852½	+ 27½	2.0	36.0
998	795	Provident†	961	+ 12	2.6	36.6
617½	400	Rathbone Brs	587½	+ 4	3.0	
69½	54½	Rea Brothers†	68		1.8	13.8
62½	49½	Rutland Tst	59½	+ 1½	3.9	
105½	80	SEC Group	90		7.1	7.0
330	317½	S & U	387½	+ 1½	6.0	10.2
2552	1730	**Schroders†**	2529	+ 80	1.1	28.9
2300	1525	Schroders N/V†	2240	+ 134	1.3	25.6
775	610	Secure Tst†	760	- 5	3.8	
185½	136½	Singer & Fried	185	+ ½	3.7	13.1
57½	48½	Trinty Law	57	+ ½		
5½	3½	Trio Hldgs	4½			
81½	67½	Union	67½	- 1		
50½	46½	Versailles Grp	50½	+ ½	1.1	30.2
432½	397½	Whitmst	432½	+ 6½	4.1	17.5

PHARMACEUTICALS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
150	63	Brit Biotech	67½	- ½	...	..
758	600	Cantab Pharms	660			
332½	272½	Celltech	307½			
356½	220	Chiroscience	331½	- 17½		
201	95	Core Group	95	- 4		
205	162	Cortecs	181½	- 3½		
1983	945	**Glaxo Wellc†**	1757	+ 26	2.2	38.2
136	81½	ML Laboratories	89½	- 5½		
185	140	Medeva	163½	- 1½	3.4	7.6
310	265	Peptide Thera	288	+ 1½		
512	194½	Powderject	507½	- 2½		
92½	43½	Proteus Intl	67½	+ 1		
71	59	Ransom (Wm)	61½		5.2	12.4
145½	124½	Quadrant Health	139½			
382½	260	Scotia	272½			
416	285½	Shire Pharms	411½	+ 3½		
103½	47½	SivePharma	89	+ 2		
888	618	**SmithKline†**	785	- 3	1.4	38.6
223	186	Therp Am Inc	187½	- 1½		
652½	422½	Vanguard	640			
163½	45½	Vanguard Wts	161½	+ ½		
245	145	Xenova	195	- 3½		
2842	2114	**Zeneca†**	2660	+ 35	1.8	34.5

PRINTING & PAPER

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
94	84	AG Holdings	84		9.6	12.1
640	520	APV▼	630		2.4	17.4
117½	68½	App Holo	91½	- 1		
203½	145½	Arjo Wiggins†	197½	- 3½	4.1	10.9
21	19½	Bath Press	19½		3.5	8.2
469½	438½	Bemrose	458½	- 4	4.5	
162½	144½	Blagden	158½		2.1	10.3
3368½	2578½	Bowater Inc	3309½	- 16½		
313½	233½	Boxtree Ind	266½	- 5	1.5	
527	425	Br Polythene†	492½	- 2½	5.1	
27½	17½	Br Thornton	25½			
291	219½	Bunzl	278	- 1½	2.5	15.5
141½	118½	Capital Inds†	127½	...	6.0	
261½	226½	Cropper (James)	231		2.6	8.3
399	268½	De La Rue	289		10.4	7.5
270½	252½	Dolphin Pack	257½	- 8½	3.6	14.9
69½	62½	Fairway Group	68½	...	7.3	21.1
100	70	Ferguson Intl	87		19.0	6.6
197½	145½	Filofax	195½		2.5	13.5
80	59½	Inveresk	74	...	10.3	
219½	185½	Jarvis Porter	218½		4.3	12.8
361	284	Low & Bonar	360		4.8	11.7
25½	18½	Lowe (Robert)†	21½	+ ½	2.3	7.9
79½	65½	MY Holdings	77½		4.4	10.5
177½	132½	Macfarlane	138½	+ ½	4.1	
335	213½	Photobition	287½	- 8½	0.6	47.7
174½	140½	Plysu	171½		5.8	13.0
30½	25½	Porter Chadbn	26		3.8	8.3
299½	228	REXAM	281½	+ 3½	6.9	11.2
532½	500	St Ives Gp	532½		2.7	16.3
332½	227½	Sappi	286½	+ 1½	2.9	
66½	30	Security & General	65½	+ 19		
122½	93	Skillar	115½		2.4	31.7
233½	165½	Smith David	194½	- ½	5.2	12.1
181	156	Smurfit (Jeff)	180	+ 2	2.5	
168	105	Sonnic	106½		3.7	11.6
146	133½	Tinsley Robor	138	+ 3½	2.7	15.3
37½	16	Wace	33	+ 3	4.4	
285	347½	Waddington	281½	- 1	4.8	12.5
347½	288	Watmough	330½	- ½	4.0	17.0
287½	223	Wyndeham	283½		2.4	17.2

PROPERTY

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
114	91	Allied Lon	114	+ ½	4.4	13.8
195	155½	Asti	191½		2.0	
32½	28½	Ashquay Grp	30½			
156½	135½	Asrianne Hldgs	156	+ ½	4.0	16.8
276	243½	Benchmark†	276	+ 1½	2.1	36.7
288½	263½	Bilton†	282½		4.9	20.6
173½	149	Birdby	159½	- ½	6.8	10.6
5½	3	Bolton Gp	3½			
64	53½	Bourne End	62	+ 1	2.4	
320½	276½	Bradford	330		3.4	22.3
825	645	**Br Land**	772	+ 4	1.4	44.1
255	213	Brixton	242	+ 1½	4.9	19.1
132	100	Buxford	129½		3.2	
147	132	CLS Hldgs	146		5.0	
318½	246½	Cap & Regnl▲	287½	- 10	1.5	27.8
460	407½	Cap Shop Cntr	456½		2.5	39.8
321½	263½	Cardiff Prop	321½		1.2	39.5
13½	9½	Carlisle	13			57.1
13½	8½	Cathay Intl	9	+ ½		
418½	343½	Chelsfield	378½	+ 1	1.1	
615	590	Chesterfield	615		2.7	
37	29	Chesterton Intl#	36			
53½	35½	City Site Ests	37½			30.0
107	90	Cleveland Tst	98		7.8	12.2
89½	82½	CNC Props	84	- 3½	5.0	
232½	185½	Compco	236½		2.3	18.9
1685	1605	Daejan	1685		3.0	16.1
21	15½	Dares Estates	17	- 1½		10.5
126½	95½	Debenhm Twsn	114	..	3.1	13.4
85	69½	Delancey Ests	83		2.3	16.9
219½	192½	Dencora	219½		2.6	12.7
585	552½	Derwent Hldgs	566½		1.5	
355	283½	Development Sec	345½	- 5	1.0	21.3
205½	172½	Edge Properties	201			21.5
420	410	Estates Agency	420		5.6	18.6
85	75½	Estates Genl	80½		1.2	20.8
155½	139½	Evans Of Leeds	153½		2.9	17.9
42½	36½	Fletcher King	40		6.2	13.2
67	61½	Follies Group	66½	+ ½	3.7	4.8
66	57½	Follies Group Br	66	+ 1	3.7	4.8
540	461	Frogmore	525½	- 2	4.8	13.6
19	14½	Golden Land Inv	15½			
370	322	Grainger	370	+ 2½	2.5	
296	237½	Gt Portland	278½	+ 3	4.0	30.6
185½	159	Grantchester	185		0.7	55.6
228½	215½	Greycoat	218	- 1	0.9	28.5
147	104½	Hambro Cntrvrt	146½	+ ½	2.6	
525½	465½	Hammerson†	525½		2.8	30.9
31½	25½	Hampton Trust	29			
605	555	Heiscal Bar	583½	- 4	2.2	16.0
50	46½	Hemingway	49½		1.4	16.4
130½	69½	HK Land	98	- 2½	7.8	
288	200	Jermyn▼	288		2.6	71.7
134½	94	LSH	125½	- 8	1.6	9.1
95½	84½	Lands Imp	92½	- 1	6.6	
1190	837½	**Land Sec**	1085	+ 9	3.1	31.2
36½	31	Lon & Assoc	35½		3.2	
13	9½	Lon & Metro	13	+ ½		0.9
136½	118½	Lon Merch Sec	135½	+ ½	4.5	12.5
607½	509½	MEPC	581½	+ 1	3.7	26.4
119½	99½	MWB Group†	112½	- 1	4.2	
150	132	McKay Secs	149		3.7	21.0
74½	65½	Mertaide Mrt	73½		3.9	6.6
351½	270	Milner Est	350½		2.5	16.8
229½	202½	Minerva▼	228½		0.9	
32½	25	Moorfield Est	30½	+ 1	2.3	
1900	1681½	Mountview	1700		3.1	11.9
169	156½	Mucklow (A&J)	166½	- ½	5.5	18.2
35	31	OEM	33		1.8	
74½	52½	ORB	71½	- 1½		31.2
38½	31½	Olives Prop	33½		2.3	
696	635	Peel†	667½		1.5	
315½	277	Pillar Prop	315½		2.1	45.8
13½	7½	Premier Land	9	- ½		
204½	189	Quintain	200½		2.2	33.5
28½	25	Raglan	25½		5.8	10.2
35½	26	Regalian	33	- ½	4.1	16.2
187½	157½	Rugby Est	184½	- ½	1.7	24.4
81½	67½	St Modwen Prop	80½	- ½	4.7	9.8
73	59	Savile Gordon	72		5.2	27.3
143	111½	Savills	142	- ½	3.3	9.9
99	92	Scot Met	98	+ 2½	4.0	17.4
232	217	Shaftesbury	227½		1.2	52.7
414½	342½	Slough Estates	397½	- 1½	2.6	26.5
262½	247½	Smart (J)	247½		4.9	9.2
109½	93	TBI	95½	- ½	2.6	31.4
195½	181½	Topic Ests	182½		1.8	39.5
114½	102	Town Centre	113½	+ ½	4.3	14.1
160½	149½	Trafford Park	156½	+ 2	3.3	16.9
97½	87½	UK Land	96½	+ 2	7.9	13.1
278½	251½	Warnerl	266½	- 2½	6.0	18.8
360	255	Wardorft	260		3.7	16.4
110½	95½	Wates▲	96			
450½	345½	Workspace Grp	448½		4.3	16.5

RETAILERS, FOOD

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
227½	173	**ASDA Group**	204½	- ½	1.9	19.2
73½	56	Budgens	60½		2.6	14.2
78½	55½	Dairy Farm Intl	72½	- 4½	5.2	
212½	169½	Fararal	169½	- 5½	3.8	12.2
40½	37½	Fitzwilton	37½		7.6	10.3
150	95	Fyffes	150	+ 3½	1.4	17.5
2512½	1995	Greggs	2512½	+ 112½	1.9	
205½	119	Iceland Group	205½	+ 3	3.3	15.8
420	262	Kwik Save	420	+ 1	6.0	15.1
263	227½	Morrison (W)	256		1.0	20.3
48½	38	Park Foods	42		8.9	12.2
402	330	**Safeway**	384		4.6	11.8
567	370	**Sainsbury J**	526½	-	3.0	21.4
364	202½	Somerfield	363½	+ 1½	3.6	12.5
265	194½	T & S Stores	264½		4.1	
620	485	**Tesco**	589½	- 7	2.3	23.5
271½	256½	Thorntons†	285½	- 1	2.6	22.6
590	505	Watson & Philip	586		4.0	16.4

RETAILERS, GENERAL

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
363½	361	Alexon	364			
266	210½	Allders	212½		4.7	10.4
180	145	Allied Carpets	157½	- 2½	6.3	13.0
508	361½	Arcadia	457½		0.3	18.5
683	390	Argos	646	- 7	3.6	20.5
41½	19½	Ashley (Laura)	36		2.1	70.9
190½	167½	Austin Reed	169	- 1	5.0	11.2
371½	306½	Beales†	311½		3.8	10.1
166½	157	Beattie (J)	162	+ ½	6.6	13.1
145	115½	Bentalls	136		2.6	4.5
398½	373½	Blacks Leis	402½	+ 8½	1.4	15.6
146	109	Body Shop	119½		5.2	12.6
990	602	**Boots†**	989½	- 11½	2.7	32.9
52½	30½	Brown & Jackson	38½	+ ½		10.4
460	415½	Brown (N)	419		2.1	23.2
606	382½	Carpetright	382½	- 6½	6.9	12.1
285	227	Christies Int	236	+ 1	2.9	18.0
432½	398	Church	425		5.2	
132½	95½	Clinton Cards	122½		3.1	
272½	185½	Country Gdns	247½	- 6	0.9	17.9
432½	332½	Courts Furnisht	423½	+ 7	1.1	19.3
587½	386½	DFS Furniture	528½	- 11½	4.8	13.2
433	362½	Debenhams	362½	- 2½	0.7	17.1
628	459	Dixons Grp	534	- 3	2.6	16.0
65	45½	Elec Boutique	62½	- ½		32.5
4½	3	ERA Gp	4½			
70½	46½	Essex Furn	50½		9.3	10.2
135	132½	Etam	134½		1.2	
170	155	Fairland Ets	159			17.3
198½	162½	Fine Art Dev	197½		6.1	15.2
323½	203½	Firad Earth	302½	6½	1.4	
564	345½	Flying Flw Ulst	561½	+ 3	1.6	
110½	95½	Formicorp	109½		2.9	46.6
427½	355	French Conn	427½		1.0	
45½	34½	Gieves	36½		3.9	
282½	217½	Goldsmiths Gp	272½	+ 5	3.4	15.6
145½	127½	Grampian Hldg	137½	+ 5	6.1	11.3
805	700	**GUS**	760	+ 6	3.0	19.8
294½	230½	Hamleys	288½	- 1½	4.9	
107½	75	Hampson Grp	104	+ 1½	3.5	10.0
343½	268½	Harveys Furn	313½		2.8	32.5
221½	150	Hse of Fraser	155½	- 1	4.5	16.7
150½	117½	Hughes (T.D)▼	148½		4.6	
823½	625	JJB Sports	661	- 1½	1.0	32.0
1180	709½	**Kingfisher**	1100	- 18	2.7	19.7
355	250	Liberty	300		1.1	
44½	35½	Limelight	36½			
141	79½	MFI	81½		7.5	8.8
654	489	**Marks Spencer**	591½	- ½	2.8	23.6
46½	39½	Merchant Retail	45½		10.0	32.6
256	216½	Moss Bros	253½	+ 6	2.7	17.0
880	515	**Next**	573½	+ 8½	4.0	15.1
33½	26	Oliver (G)	29½			
457½	382½	Ottakars Intl	445	+ 9	3.6	14.2
85	43½	Partners	47½		1.3	8.8
88½	79½	Partridge Finet	79½		7.9	6.9
39½	25½	QS Hldgs	27½			
320	295	Rosebys	297½		5.1	
107½	85½	Sax Group	89	+ 2	10.4	
60½	46½	Sears	60½	+ 3½	7.7	46.0
41½	29	Signal Group	40½			0.7
587½	389½	Smith WH	584½	+ 31½	3.3	
1300	1050	Sotheby's	1297½	+ 15	1.9	
272	216	Stonehouse	261	+ 3½	4.0	13.2
92	70½	Stylo	73		8.0	
160½	140½	Thorn	151½	- 1	11.0	8.3
127½	83½	Tie Rack	85½		4.9	8.6
3½	2½	Upton & South	2½			26.6
333½	261½	Wickes	332½		0.8	54.7
373½	280½	Wyevale†	354½		2.4	32.7

SUPPORT SERVICES

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
743½	536	AEA Tech	741	- ½	1.5	35.3
305½	129½	Acorn	195	+ ½		
200	152½	Aggreko	179	+ 2	2.6	21.9
81	68	Alpha Airpts	79½	- ½	8.4	7.6
53	32½	Alphameric	35			17.0
79	47	Anite Grp	66½	- 3½		
533½	362½	Atkins WS	519	+ 5	1.8	30.6
214½	160	BNB Res	217	- ½	4.6	
790	507½	BPP†	735		2.7	25.9
783½	667½	BTG	685	- 2½	0.2	
105½	79½	Brooks Service	102½	- 2½	5.0	
854	568½	Business Post	854	+ 1½	1.7	36.7
2692½	1517½	CMG	2692½	+ 12½	0.4	69.6
469	335	CRT Grp	454		1.2	63.1
972½	812½	Card Gp	967½	+ 2½	1.6	
466½	311½	Capita Group†	452½		0.6	70.2
8½	6½	Chemex	7½		3.3	9.5
245½	212½	Corp Services†	245	- ½	3.0	18.0
31½	24½	Coutts Consltg	25		0.5	
535½	317½	DCS Gp	502½	+ 4½	0.6	
315	235	Danka Bs Sys	278		1.3	11.9
420	302	Davis Service	388½		3.7	20.9
630	670	Delphi	755	- 2½	1.3	
970	682½	Diagonal†	930	- 2½	0.5	70.8
27½	19½	Eurocopy†	20	- ½	15.2	3.3
67½	51½	EW Fact	55½	+ ½	4.6	
70	51	El Data Prct	69½	+ 4	4.0	15.5
1502½	927½	FI Group	1312½		0.6	72.8
455	337	Harvey Nash	442	+ 7	1.1	
1120	773	Hays	1070	+ 8	1.1	37.1
57½	51½	High-PointRntl	57			
289	255½	Hogg Robinson	276½		4.6	12.9
1257½	590	JBA Hldgs	612½		1.0	57.0
311	232½	Johnson Cleant	263½	- 3	5.6	
69½	47½	Kalamazoo	50½	- ½	10.5	
847½	570	Kewill Sys	845	- 2½	1.5	20.5
24½	13½	Laser-Scan	19			
502½	317½	Lavendon†	498½	+ 14½	1.0	32.4
1652½	1147½	Logica†	1640	+ 5	0.8	47.1
795	505	Lorien†	777½	- 12½	1.2	48.4
200	130½	Lynx Group	195	- 4	1.3	28.6
75½	42½	MDIS	71			
1015	772½	MMT Comp	970	- 10	1.5	32.6
147½	109½	MR Group†	137½	- 2	3.6	18.2
380	320	Macro 4†	376		8.6	10.8
72½	52½	Malmore Abbey	71		1.1	21.3
721	478½	Micro Focus	602½			24.4
110½	55	Microgen†	110	+ 35½	5.7	14.7
3300	1825	Misys†	2800	- 20	0.6	46.8
282½	230½	MITIE Gp	281½	+ ½	1.0	30.9
53½	51½	Novo Group	53½		3.7	12.1
55½	41½	Orbis	48	- ½	3.4	12.8
680	500	PSD†	605	- 5	1.7	
836½	635	Parity	795	+ 1	0.8	
296	240	Pegasus	290	+ 5	1.3	
242½	145	Penna	215	+ 3½	1.3	11.0
256½	151	Photo-Me†	240	+ 5	2.9	22.2
45½	35	Proudfoot	43½	- ½		
222	165	RCO	201		10.0	26.0
292	218½	RPS Group†	291		2.1	24.0
53	25½	Radiant	52½	+ 9	2.6	
447½	317½	Real Time	436	- 6½	1.7	15.0
113½	79	Rebus	100	- 1	2.4	31.9
193	119½	Reed Executive	174	+ 1	2.0	10.0
175	162	Reliance Sec	171	+ 5	5.0	15.1
400	265	**Rentokil Intl**	391	- 6	1.0	37.7
205½	152½	Ricardo Group†	204½		4.0	25.7
576	455	Robert Walters	568½	+ 6	0.9	36.1
510	325	Rolfe & Nolan	325	- 147½		54.4
382½	297½	Royalblue†	300		0.9	40.4
1420	825	Sage Gp	1385	- 7½	0.3	58.1
157	74	Sanderson	140½		4.4	13.2
775	551	Select Appt	775	+ 12½	0.6	33.2
2395	1475	Serna Gp	2392½	+ 7½	0.4	61.0
1301	868	Serco Grp	1301	+ 2½	0.6	54.5
195½	154½	Shanks & McEwan	181	- 3	2.8	32.8
905	530	Sherwd Intl†	870		0.8	36.5
60½	44	Simon Gp	59½	+ 2½		
61	37½	Skatchley	51	+ 1½		
285	181½	Skillsgroup	280½	+ 14½	1.9	25.5
125	110	Sta-Plus	112½		13.3	10.4
167	92	Superscape VR	160½			
1165	85	Toner	97½	- 7	3.0	
3300	2250	Tyco Intl	3150		0.2	
126½	86½	WSP Group†	105	- ½	3.3	
225	210	Warner Howro	210		6.5	9.5
230	176	Waste Mgt Intl	227½			40.1
415½	332½	Waste Recyct	405½	- 1	0.8	37.4
238½	199	Whitehead Mann	231½	- 1	2.5	19.1
79½	62½	White Young Grn	74½	- 3	5.9	11.5
500	304	**Williams**	473	- 5	3.4	24.1

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
718½	411½	**BT**	671	+ 3	3.5	19.4
1637½	614½	COLT Telecom	1412½	+ 2½		
765	467½	**Cable Wireless**	748	- 5	1.8	31.4
428½	264½	Cable&Wire Comm	421	+ 9½		
725	252½	Energis	707½	+ 42½		
303	250	Euro Telecom	303	+ 13	1.1	25.5
171	77½	General Cable	169½			
445	239½	**Orange**	438	+ 27		
415½	286½	Securicor†	403½	- 1	0.5	52.4
95½	68½	TeleWest	89½	- ½		
664	298	**Vodafone**	659	+ 30	1.0	54.3

TRANSPORT

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
277½	210	Air London	269	+ 1	3.0	16.5
357	219	All Nippon Air	256½	- 12	0.5	
495½	344½	Arriva†	491	- ½	3.4	14.0
388	282½	Assoc Br Ports†	379½	+ ½	3.0	19.5
367	284½	Autologic	354	- 1	2.6	
244	166½	Avis Europe	237½	- 6½	1.7	24.5
629	402½	**BAA**	622½	+ 19½	2.6	19.0
661	498	**Br Airways**	643	+ 10	3.0	32.2
110½	90½	Clarkson (H)	98½		5.2	
178½	135½	Clydeport Ops	178½	+ 16	4.0	
347½	317½	Dart	345½		2.4	16.9
67½	43½	Eurotunnel Uts	46	+ ½		
377	221½	FirstGroup	376	+ 7	2.0	26.8
140	125	Fisher (James)†	125		3.2	
690	580	Forth Ports	667	- 3	2.8	
600	510	Go-Ahead†	590½	+ 1½	1.9	14.1
601½	490	Goode Durrant	598½	- 1	2.2	17.7
441	305½	Helphire Gp	361	+ 4½	0.3	44.4
1055	740	Irish Cont	1055		0.5	22.5
87½	74½	Jacobs	87	+ ½	3.3	
92½	60	Lon O'Seas Frts	67½			
613	490	Mersey Docks†	609		3.0	23.4
187½	138½	NFC	185½	+ ½	3.8	19.4
861½	676	Natl Express†	861½	+ 10	2.0	19.4
792	562½	Ocean Group	782	+ 6	2.3	33.7
104½	92½	Ocean Wilson	95		5.0	17.1
933½	650	**P & O Dfd†**	905	+ 11	4.2	29.5
116½	107½	P & O 5.5%	108½	+ 1	6.3	
1093½	571½	**Railtrack**	1043	+ 12	2.7	19.8
130	98	Salvesen (C)	123	- 2	5.8	17.7
47½	36	Seacon	40		3.9	30.4
270	244	Seascope Shp	253½		6.2	8.5
311½	180	Servisair†	257½	+ 21½	2.6	
1017	765	Stagecoach	1017	+ 13½	1.2	23.2
628	547½	Tibbet & Britn	600		3.8	
258½	189	TDG†	203½	+ 1	5.8	13.2
116½	76½	Uniand	108	- ½	5.9	
72½	39½	Utd Carriers	60	..	7.5	

WATER

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
967	780	Anglian	960½	+ 6½	4.7	13.0
335	285	East Surrey	314		4.5	12.7
1053½	907	Hyder	978		5.8	9.3
129½	115½	Hyder Cm Pn	123½	+ ½	8.0	
770	660	Mid Kent Hdgs	765		5.1	11.4
1085	665	**Severn Trent**	988	- 7	4.8	10.9
3625	3265	South Staffs	3620	+ 25	3.2	15.0
1005	864½	South West	990	+ 10	4.8	12.5
1043	800	**Thames**	986	+ 1	4.5	11.0
906	678	**Utd Utilities**	865	- 6½	5.5	14.0
560	465	Wessex	516	- 2½	4.6	10.0
560	467½	Yorkshire	523½	- 1	4.7	10.2

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

High	Low	Company	Price	+/-	Yld %	P/E
370	252½	Abacus Recruit	295		0.6	20.2
225	193	Calo Inns	223½		1.7	17.0
222½	155	Dawson Hldgs	175	- 1	3.4	15.7
35½	29	Freepages	35	+ ½		
65½	52	Megalomedia	52½		0.5	21.6
38½	22½	Memory Corp	25			
480	344	Prism Rail	462½	+ 10	2.4	
847½	620	Ramco Egy	680	- 20		
810	740	Southern Newst	806½	- 1	3.3	15.8
94½	84½	Southern Vectio	94½	...	2.8	14.7
27½	14½	Trocadero†	25½			

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension † Ex dividend ‡ Ex scrip ▲ Ex rights issue ▼ Ex all § Ex capital distribution * Figures or report awaited. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

BRITISH FUNDS

1997/98 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gs red yld
SHORTS (under 5 years)						
116[illegible]	116	Treas 4½% 1998	118[illegible]	+ [illegible]	3.96	7.83
100[illegible]	100	Treas 7¼% 1998	101		7.25	7.65
102[illegible]	100[illegible]	Treas 14% 1998-01	100[illegible]	- [illegible]	13.87	6.97
105[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	103[illegible]	- [illegible]	14.92	7.03
104[illegible]	103	Exch 12% 1998	103	- [illegible]	11.65	6.96
102[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	101[illegible]		9.32	6.91
106[illegible]	104[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	104[illegible]	- [illegible]	11.67	6.86
104[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 10½% 1999	103[illegible]		10.10	6.81
99[illegible]	98[illegible]	Treas 6% 1999	99[illegible]		6.05	6.65
106[illegible]	105[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	105[illegible]	+ [illegible]	9.72	6.88
105[illegible]	104[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	104[illegible]	+ [illegible]	8.63	6.56
104[illegible]	103[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	103[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.70	6.56
103[illegible]	102[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2000	103[illegible]	- [illegible]	8.23	6.57
114[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	113[illegible]	- [illegible]	11.48	6.54
109[illegible]	108[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	109[illegible]	- [illegible]	9.15	6.39
102[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	102[illegible]	- [illegible]	6.83	6.21
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)						
103[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 7% 2002	103[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.78	6.10
113[illegible]	112[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	113[illegible]	- [illegible]	8.58	6.18
108[illegible]	106[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	108[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.36	5.91
118[illegible]	116[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	118[illegible]	+ [illegible]	8.47	6.03
114[illegible]	113	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113[illegible]	+ [illegible]	10.13	6.38
93	90[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	93	+ [illegible]	3.76	4.80
118[illegible]	116[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	118[illegible]	- [illegible]	7.99	5.97
104[illegible]	101[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	104[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.45	5.80
116[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	116[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.33	5.87
120[illegible]	117[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	120[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.91	5.98
130[illegible]	128[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	130[illegible]	+ [illegible]	9.58	6.02
111[illegible]	107[illegible]	Treas 7½% 2006	111[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.74	5.83
112[illegible]	108[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	112[illegible]	- [illegible]	6.90	5.83
107	105[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	107	- [illegible]	7.48	6.18
123[illegible]	121[illegible]	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	123[illegible]	+ [illegible]	9.54	6.10
118[illegible]	115	Treas 8½% 2007	118[illegible]	- [illegible]	7.15	5.83
110[illegible]	106[illegible]	Treas 7¼% 2007	110[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.54	5.76
125[illegible]	121[illegible]	Treas 9% 2008	125[illegible]	+ [illegible]	7.19	5.77
118[illegible]	113[illegible]	Treas 8% 2009	118[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.76	5.78
104[illegible]	99[illegible]	Treas 6¼% 2010	104[illegible]	+ [illegible]	5.99	5.76
129[illegible]	124[illegible]	Conv 9% 2011	129[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.95	5.78
130[illegible]	125[illegible]	Treas 9% 2012	130[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.88	5.80
98[illegible]	93[illegible]	Treas 5½% 2008-12	98[illegible]	+ [illegible]	5.57	5.62
118[illegible]	112[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	118[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.56	5.81
LONGS (over 15 years)						
122[illegible]	116[illegible]	Treas 8% 2013	122[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.54	5.80
125[illegible]	118[illegible]	Treas 8% 2015	125[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.39	5.71
135[illegible]	127[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 2017	135[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.48	5.73
129[illegible]	121[illegible]	Tr 8% 2021	129[illegible]	+ [illegible]	6.17	5.68
UNDATED						
60[illegible]	55[illegible]	War Ln 3½%	60[illegible]	+ [illegible]	5.77	
42[illegible]	38[illegible]	Treas 2½%	42[illegible]	+ [illegible]	5.94	
66[illegible]	61[illegible]	Consols 4%	66[illegible]	- [illegible]	6.02	
INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:					5%	3%
197[illegible]	194[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2001	197[illegible]	+ [illegible]	2.74	3.06
196[illegible]	192[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2003	195[illegible]	+ [illegible]	2.80	3.01
126[illegible]	124[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	126[illegible]	+ [illegible]	2.72	2.91
211[illegible]	206[illegible]	Treas IL 2% 2006	211[illegible]	+ [illegible]	2.78	2.92
193[illegible]	187[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2009	193[illegible]	+ [illegible]	2.76	2.87
202[illegible]	195[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2011	202[illegible]	+1	2.76	2.86
169[illegible]	162[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2013	169[illegible]	+ [illegible]	2.76	2.84
184[illegible]	175[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2016	184[illegible]	+1[illegible]	2.75	2.83
179[illegible]	170[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2020	179[illegible]	+1[illegible]	2.77	2.84
152[illegible]	142[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2024	152[illegible]	+1[illegible]	2.76	2.81
149[illegible]	140[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	149[illegible]	+1[illegible]	2.73	2.78

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NAAFI
FORCES FAVOURITE 30
Taking the naff out of the Naafi

BUSINESS

WEEKEND MONEY
SECTION2 PAGES 51-64

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY APRIL 4 1998

Branson may float Virgin Entertainment

BY CHRIS AYRES AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

RICHARD BRANSON is considering a stock market flotation for Virgin Entertainment Group, which owns Virgin Cinemas in the UK and some Virgin Megastore overseas.

The plans are being drawn up as speculation intensifies in the City that the proposed flotation of Virgin Rail, expected this spring, may be delayed until the autumn and may not happen until 1999.

The flotation would represent a U-turn for Mr Branson, who has long boasted about the advantages of keeping his empire private. He told *The Times* yesterday that he still enjoyed "the luxury of not being under the magnifying glass".

However, Mr Branson added that the recent US$216 million (£130 million) flotation of Virgin Express, the cut-price airline, had increased his faith in the stock market. He said: "There is a chance that one or two other Virgin companies will come to the market shortly." His comments came as Virgin executives denied suggestions that the flotation of the trains company is to be shelved or even abandoned. Doubts over the proposed flotation have surfaced in the City in recent weeks in the absence of details about the £250 million sell-off — due to take place in early summer.

Virgin insisted that an early flotation had now been made more likely by provisional approval given by the rail regulator for Virgin plans to upgrade its west coast mainline. A final decision on the flotation is expected this month when Virgin meets shareholders, led by Merrill Lynch, that are pressing for an early flotation.

Mr Branson is under some pressure to come to a swift decision on whether to float during the summer or in the autumn, or lose his majority vote on Virgin Rail.

Aides to Mr Branson confirmed that Virgin Entertainment Group, could also be in line for flotation, possibly within the next two years.

Virgin Entertainment Group was formed in September last year to merge Mr Branson's cinema and retailing interest.

A credit facility of £150 million was provided by Bankers' Trust. The group excludes Virgin's 25 per cent stake in WH Smith's Virgin Our Price retail operation in the UK. The Virgin cinema chain was established in 1995, when Mr Branson bought 116 UK cinemas from MGM. Virgin later sold 93 of the smaller theatres for £69 million to a management buyout team in 1996. Since then, it has refurbished half the remaining 23 cinemas and opened six new multiplexes.

Virgin plans to open 22 more multiplexes over the next three years, and also plans to invest up to $60 million (£36 million) over the same three-year period on expanding its cinema chain into the US and Japan.

Commentary, page 29

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6064.2	(+11.4)
Yield	2.69%	
FTSE All share	2832.37	(+5.39)
Nikkei	15517.78	(-185.12)
New York:		
Dow Jones	8967.21	(-19.43)*
S&P Composite	1121.00	(+0.99)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 7/16%*	(5 5/16)
Long Bond	104 16/32*	(103 31/32)
Yield	5.78%*	(5.84%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	7 1/16	(7 1/16)
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	109 6	(108 15/32)

STERLING

New York		
$	1.6582*	(1.6643)
London:		
$	1.6600	(1.6687)
DM	3.0663	(3.0853)
FFr	10.2755	(10.3360)
SFr	2.5336	(2.5491)
Yen	223.66	(222.88)
£ Index	107.9	(108.5)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.8513*	(1.8542)
FFr	6.2046*	(6.2150)
SFr	1.5296*	(1.5330)
Yen	135.05*	(133.70)
$ Index	111.1	(110.6)

Tokyo close Yen 134.52

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jun) $14.85 ($14.50)

GOLD

London close $306.35 ($302.65)

* denotes midday trading price

Argos fights GUS with £431m payout

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

ARGOS has vowed to return £431 million to its shareholders in return for their loyalty in the face of a £1.6 billion hostile takeover bid by Great Universal Stores. The company has also forecast a 27 per cent jump in profits.

Argos told its shareholders that, if the 570p-a-share GUS bid is rejected, they will receive 150p for each share held. It also said that, putting Argos on a sector trading multiple and adding the 150p, the shares have "an implied value" of 700p.

GUS dismissed Argos's claims. Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale, its chairman, said: "It is extraordinary that, after a series of profit warnings, Argos believes it deserves a blue chip price earnings multiple similar to Marks & Spencer, Kingfisher and Boots. To apply that multiple to a substantially adjusted and quite imaginary profits figure is totally unrealistic."

Analysts expressed some concern about the scale of Argos's return of cash, which was far greater than they had expected and which would leave the company with negative net assets. "Argos would effectively be controlled by its banks. I think Argos has rather over-egged the pudding," one said.

Analysts were divided on what is likely to happen, with some expecting to see GUS return with as much as 670p a share and others predicting that the company will offer very little more — perhaps 600p — or even stick at its original 570p price. GUS is expected to respond early next week.

'I am determined to deliver the value inherent in Argos' strategy to Argos shareholders. GUS' offer woefully undervalues Argos and should be rejected.'
Stuart Rose, chief executive of Argos

'It is extraordinary that, after... profit warnings, Argos believes it deserves a blue chip price-earnings multiple similar to Marks and Spencer, Kingfisher and Boots.'
Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale, chairman of GUS

Argos' defence document included a forecast for interim pre-tax profit of £35.9 million, up 26.9 per cent on last year. The forecast for total dividends per share was 21.2p, an increase of 15 per cent. The company also said that it plans to close its two First Stop shops, which sell heavily discounted goods and were opened on a trial basis, at a cost of about £2 million.

Stuart Rose, chief executive of Argos, said: "We have already announced a powerful retailing strategy for an independent Argos. Argos does not need GUS. Today, we have announced a package which demonstrates the financial strength of Argos while leaving in place a robust platform for continued growth. I am determined to deliver the value inherent in Argos's strategy to Argos shareholders. GUS's offer woefully undervalues Argos and should be rejected."

Argos shares, which have been rising steadily on the expectation that GUS will increase its bid, closed down 2p at 646p while GUS closed 6p higher at 760p.

GUS moved a step closer to securing its acquisition of Metromail, the US data business, when the Delaware Supreme Court denied an appeal by rival bidder, American Business Information, against a ruling that had prevented it from blocking GUS's bid.

Hot Seat, page 30
Tempus, page 31

ROBIN MAYES



Stuart Rose said the package announced demonstrated Argos's financial strength

New VW engine could help win Rolls

BY ADAM JONES

VOLKSWAGEN, which has made a dramatic improved bid for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, is understood to be testing a new 12-cylinder engine that could be built in Britain and used in the luxury carmaker's new range.

For its renewed offer to be taken seriously in the face of BMW's £340 million bid, which Vickers accepted in principle earlier this week, VW has to get round the problem of BMW's engine-supply agreement.

Bernd Pischetsrieder, the BMW chairman, has said that he will stop supplying the 12-cylinder engine for the new Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph, and the eight-cylinder engine for the new Bentley Arnage, if Rolls goes to another bidder.

Volkswagen's new offer for Rolls-Royce is thought to include a bid for Cosworth, the high-performance engine maker owned by Vickers. The new 12-cylinder engine being developed by VW is an expansion of existing six-cylinder technology used in VW's Golf and Passat. The more powerful engine could be made at Cosworth and used in some way in the new range if BMW withdraws.

The engine swap would still be a huge gamble that could damage sales of the new cars. VW refused to comment on the matter yesterday, but a spokesman did confirm that a renewed bid has gone to Vickers, which put Rolls up for sale last year. "We think the new bid is financially superior to the BMW bid," he said.

Vickers responded by issuing a statement to the London Stock Exchange repeating that it will not negotiate with anyone other than BMW until the end of April. "The company is therefore not in a position to respond to any unsolicited offers during that period," it said.

Vickers shareholders will have to vote on the BMW offer at a special meeting, likely to be in May. It is thought likely that they will be lobbied by VW before the end of the exclusive negotiating period with BMW. One big shareholder said this week that a BMW resolution from Vickers directors could be rejected by investors if they believed that a concrete higher offer had not been taken on board. Shares in Vickers rose 6½p to 237p yesterday.

Liberty sued by ousted Cassidy

BY JON ASHWORTH

DENIS CASSIDY, ousted in December as chairman of Liberty, the Regent Street retailer, is suing the company for more than £200,000 in compensation for loss of office.

In an action lodged at the High Court in London, he alleges Liberty acted in breach of his contract in terminating his employment without due notice. He is suing for £115,000 in lieu of 12 months' notice, and seeking various additional sums totalling just under £208,000, with the possibility of further sums in bonuses that would have been payable this year.

Two other former Liberty directors, Andrew Garety and Ian Thomson, are separately suing for more than £1 million. Mr Garety, the former finance director and chairman, is claiming compensation of £560,000 for loss of office. Mr Thomson, the former managing director, is claiming £536,000.

Mr Garety and Mr Thomson resigned in January under pressure from the same faction that forced Mr Cassidy's departure. The Stewart-Liberty family, working with Brian Myerson, the South African investor, and with the support of the Merchant Navy Officers Pension Fund, together spoke for more than 50 per cent of the Liberty shares. They had threatened to call an extraordinary general meeting to force through the board changes.

Pound falls sharply to end at low for the week

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE pound, which set off a political spat when it reached a nine-year high of DM3.10, fell sharply in late trading yesterday to end the week at below Monday's opening.

Sterling was quoted at DM3.0679 in late London trading, down on the DM3.0762 that prevailed a week earlier and significantly lower than its peak on Tuesday of above DM3.10.

The spotlight on the foreign exchanges yesterday moved from sterling to the dollar and yen. The US currency reached a 6½-year high against the yen on the surprise news that Moody's, the credit rating agency, had lowered the rating outlook on Japan's debt and domestic currency. Dealers in Tokyo said that the Bank of Japan had intervened to support the yen.

The other major focus of market was that the US non-farm payrolls had fallen by 36,000 in March, the first decline in this key indicator of the labour market since January, 1996. Wall Street economists had expected the number of jobs outside the agricultural sector would rise by 220,000. The news was seen as a signal the US economy may be slowing down to a more sustainable pace and the US Federal Reserve is even less likely to raise interest rates.

In early trading on Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average breached 9,000 points for the first time. By early afternoon it had slipped 12.45 points lower at 8,974.19.

In London the FTSE 100 closed 11.4 points higher at 6,064.2.

Stock market, page 31

Groups cool on bank code

TESCO, Harrods Bank and even Richard Branson's banking operation, Virgin One, have failed to sign the banking code of good practice, the industry's guidelines for consumer protection (Richard Miles writes).

The voluntary code commits banks to certain levels of service and informs customers how to complain. Tesco says it does not need to adopt the code because its service is provided by the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), which is a signatory. Virgin One also uses RBS.

Harrods Bank was unavailable for comment.

Harrods Bank was unavailable for comment.

Nomura leads race to buy RoadChef

BY DOMINIC WALSH

NOMURA has overtaken Nikko, its Japanese rival, in the race to buy RoadChef, the motorway service group. The investment bank's acquisitive finance arm is understood to be in final negotiations on a deal valuing RoadChef at around £200 million. Unless Nikko raises its offer again the deal is expected to be signed in the next few days.

The biggest beneficiary of the sale will be Tim Ingram Hill, the group's chairman, who led a management buyout in 1983. Mr Ingram Hill, who is believed to have a 60 per cent stake, is thought to have been prompted to ask Arthur Andersen to canvass buyers after Welcome Break was sold last year for an astonishing £476 million.

There will also be big payouts to around 400 RoadChef staff who are members of its employee share ownership plan.

RoadChef, founded in 1972, is Britain's third-biggest motorway service station operator behind Granada and Welcome Break, with a 17 per cent market share. In 1996, the last year for which figures are available, it reported pre-tax profits of £3.2 million.

A WEEK IN THE CITY

Gentlemen, place your bets. For some, it was a dead cert this week as the stock market soared through 6,000, and corporate excess swept along with it. The pound hit its highest level in ten years, while a Teutonic tussle broke out over Rolls-Royce Motor Cars.

Star billing this week goes to GTech, the American lottery expert which unravelled itself from Camelot, operator of the National Lottery — and collected £51 million for its troubles. Camelot has bought out GTech's 22.5 per cent stake, saying it is "bowing to the public mood", but the Americans continue with the day-to-day running of the lottery.

The move follows Richard Branson's High Court libel victory over Guy Snowden, the GTech co-founder, who was held to have tried to bribe Branson to stay out of the race for the lottery licence. The Government intends to replace the lottery regulator with a five-member committee in the hope of restoring public confidence.

Also ranking high in the "easy money" stakes is Leon Davis, chief executive of Rio Tinto, the world's biggest mining group. Davis, an Australian, enjoys the run of a London house that would cost more than £270,000 a year to rent, according to the Rio Tinto annual report. The company picks up the tab.

BMW, the German carmaker, appeared to trump its rivals with a £340 million bid for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars — but the race is not over. Volkswagen made a higher offer and may appeal directly to the shareholders of Vickers, owner of the luxury marque.

Wednesday brought a new landmark for the FTSE 100 index of leading shares, which closed above 6,000 points for the first time. The pound rose above DM3.10, heaping pressure on UK exporters and fuelling fears of recession. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, told the Treasury Select Committee that it would be wrong to give in to short-term pressures.

Courtaulds, the chemicals group, could soon disappear into the arms of a foreign buyer. Talks are under way with an unnamed bidder — thought to be Akzo Nobel of The Netherlands. Sir Richard Sykes, chairman of Glaxo Wellcome, admitted in evidence to MPs that the £100 billion merger with SmithKline Beecham foundered on disagreements over the pecking order of senior management. Glaxo Wellcome executives stood to make about £70,000 each from share options had the deal gone ahead.

Tokyo's "Big Bang" ushered in an era of more open competition amid predictions that the Japanese economy could be entering a long spiral of deflation.

There had to be one loser this week. Enter Terry Ramsden, the bankrupt former head of Edinburgh-based Glen International, who faces a possible prison sentence for failing to disclose assets. Ramsden made a fortune in the 1980s trading Japanese warrants, indulging himself with Ferraris, Rolls-Royces and a Gulfstream jet.

It did not last. Ramsden lost an estimated £58 million at the races over the years, including £2 million in a single day. Try that at Aintree.

JON ASHWORTH

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Japan shaken by Moody's debt warning

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

JAPAN'S ailing economy and national pride took another battering yesterday after Moody's Investors Service, the influential American debt ratings agency, issued a warning about the Japanese Government's top-notch bond rating.

Stock and bond prices fell and the yen sank to its lowest level in six-and-a-half years, propelled by Moody's announcement that it had downgraded its outlook on Japan's Triple-A rated sovereign debt to "negative" from "stable".

Moody's said the downgrading reflected doubts about the ability of Japanese leaders to agree on policies to revive the world's second-largest economy. Senior government officials expressed incredulity and annoyance at the warning.

Kanezo Muraoka, chief government spokesman, responded: "The economy is stalled but the Government understands Japan has strong fundamentals in many respects."

Hikaru Matsunaga, Finance Minister, declined to comment on the report but promised swift action. But ruling Liberal Democratic Party leaders continue to bicker over the 16 trillion yen (£72 billion) stimulus package outlined last week.

Government action to boost the economy is being held up by a row over whether to include tax cuts, and so make a policy U-turn that would gravely weaken Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister who has staked his political life on fiscal tightening.

The dithering by the Government has shaken confidence at home and overseas. On Thursday the chairman of Sony, Norio Ohga, said the Japanese economy was on the verge of collapse and criticized Mr Hashimoto's failure to take decisive action. His sentiments were echoed yesterday by Hiroshi Okuda, president of Toyota Motor Corp, who told *The Times*: "If Japanese government policy remains unchanged, what Mr Ohga said might become a reality."

Economists said the risk of Japan defaulting on its debt obligation was minuscule. But that did not stop the yen tumbling. The dollar broke through 135 yen level, its highest since September 1991, before falling back on intervention by the Bank of Japan. Japanese stocks were also hit, with the key Nikkei index falling more than 1 per cent to 15,517.78.

CCG insists Asian crisis is growth opportunity

BY RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

CORDIANT Communications, the advertising and marketing group, said yesterday it saw the difficulties in south Asia as an opportunity to grow market share. However, it has written off £2.2 million in goodwill in Indonesia as a precaution.

Arthur D'Angelo, finance director, said yesterday that although 28 per cent of Cordiant's revenues came from the Asia-Pacific region, 18 per cent came from Australia and New Zealand, 5 per cent from India and China and only 5 per cent from troubled south Asia.

"We are looking at this as an opportunity to grow our business," said Mr D'Angelo.

Lorna Tilbian, the Panmure Gordon media analyst, has downgraded her 1998 pre-tax forecast for a demerged Cordiant from £31.5 million to *around £29 million* because of the likely impact of Asian currency movements.

Cordiant and Saatchi & Saatchi, which demerged on December 14, yesterday published pro forma results for 1997 calculated as if they had been separate companies throughout the year.

Cordiant (CCG) said pro forma revenue in 1997 was £307.6 million, compared with £327.9 million in 1996, although there was a 4 per cent rise at constant prices. Trading profit rose 20 per cent to £24 million — a 42 per cent rise at constant rates. Earnings rose from 5.2p a share to 5.9p and a 1.2p dividend represented a 20 per cent rise. CCG shares fell 1½p to 134½p.

At Saatchi & Saatchi Bob Seelert, chief executive, said the company was "high stepping" into its first demerged year and added: "Independence suits us."

Satchi & Saatchi, whose shares have risen from 110p to 172p in just two months, had pro forma revenues of £374.8 million compared with £368.8 million last time, a 9.6 per cent rise. Profit before interest, tax and exceptionals rose 39.1 per cent to £30.6 million. Earnings rose to 6.6p a share before exceptional items, compared with 4.1p last time.

The company said it had won a record $183 million worth of new billings in the first quarter including the Oil of Ulay account in the US from Procter & Gamble.

Ms Tilbian said Saatchi, which has virtually no Asian exposure, had produced results in line with expectations and her pre-tax forecast of £31 million is unchanged. Saatchi shares fell 5½p to 167p.

Commentary, page 29

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.63	2.45
Austria Sch	22.64	20.98
Belgium Fr	66.65	61.89
Canada $	2.486	2.298
Cyprus Cyp£	0.939	0.868
Denmark Kr	12.32	11.43
Finland Mkk	9.89	9.14
France Fr	10.78	10.00
Germany Dm	3.24	3.00
Greece Dr	559	520
Hong Kong $	13.72	12.52
Iceland	133	113
Ireland Pt	1.26	1.19
Israel Shk	6.43	5.78
Italy Lira	3306	2971
Japan Yen	239.96	222.45
Malta	0.699	0.640
Netherlds Gld	3.655	3.380
New Zealand $	3.16	2.93
Norway Kr	13.33	12.39
Portugal Esc	327.46	305.43
S Africa Rd	9.09	8.13
Spain Pta	272.50	253.71
Sweden Kr	14.11	13.01
Switzerland Fr	2.70	2.48
Turkey Lira	410511	380633
USA $	1.771	1.628

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



David Edmonds yesterday promised to protect and strengthen the rights of consumers as he took over at Oftel

Edmonds takes over at Oftel

BY RAYMOND SNODDY MEDIA EDITOR

DAVID EDMONDS, the new Director-General of Telecommunications, promised yesterday to protect and strengthen the rights of consumers as the distinctions between telecoms, broadcasting and information technology continue to blur.

Mr Edmonds, who was managing director of group central services at NatWest Group between 1991 and 1997, has now taken over formally at Oftel following the departure of Don Cruickshank.

Mr Edmonds said his other key task was to make sure the UK telecoms companies have a regulatory framework "which allows them to compete, grow and exploit new opportunities to the benefit of the UK economy".

Mr Edmonds, who is 54, is a former civil servant who was also chief executive of the Housing Corporation.

Disappearing Dalgety lifts investors' payout

BY CARL MORTISHED

THE dismemberment of Dalgety is yielding even more cash for shareholders. The agribusiness company is adding £25 million to the capital repayment of £650 million announced in February, and investors can expect further distributions from Dalgety's successor, PIC International, the pig-breeding company.

The European Commission has cleared the sale of Dalgety's petfood business to Nestlé earlier than expected. Completion of the capital restructuring and repayment will take place on June 26 and investors will receive, for each Dalgety share, a share in PIC plus 232.5p in cash. The early European clearance means that investors will no longer receive some of the cash in loan notes.

As part of the new arrangement, Dalgety, whose chief executive is Ken Hanna, is proposing to scrap the final dividend, which would have been paid to shareholders in December.

Instead, the company is enhancing the capital repayment by £25 million, equal to 8.5p per share. The change means that its shareholders will receive their cash gross as a repayment of capital rather than as a dividend, which would be subject to advance corporation tax.



Hanna: capital repayment

PIC International, the pig-breeder, is expected to be valued at around £350 million, but the company will also be free of debt with some £50 million to £70 million in the bank.

That figure could rise further if Dalgety succeeds in current negotiations to sell Dalgety Agriculture to its management. A spokesman said: "The new company will be in a reasonable position to return further capital to shareholders."

Dalgety Agriculture is expected to be sold for about £50 million.

ARGOS plc

Chief Executive Stuart Rose recently outlined your company's retail strategy for growth in a presentation titled "Fast Forward".

Shareholders wishing to obtain a video of the Fast Forward presentation and hear Argos' financial case for rejecting the bid should call:

0800 882 828

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Eurotunnel debt plan under way

BY MARTIN BARROW

EUROTUNNEL is to begin paying interest on its debt mountain next week after a 30-month suspension when the company's debt restructuring finally comes into effect.

Eurotunnel halted the payment of interest on more than £8 billion in subordinated debt in September 1995 pending the conclusion of negotiations with its creditor banks.

The negotiations were completed in November 1997 with an agreement under which the banks wrote down £2 billion of the debt and reduced the interest rate on the balance in exchange for an equity stake.

Eurotunnel will issue to the banks more than 7.7 billion new units, comprising one Eurotunnel SA share and one Eurotunnel plc share, which begin trading in London and Paris on Wednesday. Creditors will also receive a combination of loan notes and convertible warrants.

In addition to writing down £2 billion in debt and reducing interest rates on the balance, the banks extended an extra £1.85 billion in credit.

The debt restructuring plan gives Eurotunnel's 174 creditor banks 45.5 per cent of the company in exchange for £1 billion of debt.

Creditors could eventually hold as much as 75.5 per cent of Eurotunnel if all instruments issued as part of the restructuring are converted into equity.

The shares traded at 46p yesterday, against a 12-month high of 84p and a five-year high of 583p.

GTE plans sell-offs to raise $3bn

BY RAYMOND SNODDY MEDIA EDITOR

GTE, one of the world's largest telephone companies, with ambitions to expand into Europe said yesterday it is embarking on a plan to reposition or dispose of non-strategic assets which would generate up to $3 billion (£1.8 billion) for reinvestment. Cost-cutting is expected to raise another $500 million.

Some local telephone businesses will be sold Airfone, an air-to-ground communications subsidiary will either be sold or injected into a partnership.

Investments in Hybrid Fiber Coax, an analogue video system, will be written down because of digital developments precluding the need for building a separate network.

GTE has annual revenues of $23 billion.

Compagnie Générale des Eaux changes its image

French water starts to live

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

FOR the past 145 years, it has been known prosaically as the Compagnie Générale des Eaux: the General Water Company. But yesterday, as the winds of Cool Britannia blew across the Channel, the French conglomerate said it was adopting the altogether trendier name of Vivendi.

The company's chairman, Jean-Marie Messier, startled France's conservative business community by announcing what amounts to the country's first corporate redesign.

"The name Vivendi is warm, full of life and it resembles what we do — local services which improve daily life," M Messier said. "It will give the group the international fame that it lacks today."

Behind the change, however, lies his ambition to transform from a utilities firm into a group focussed on the media and telecommunications industry. After taking over the French media group, Havas, last month, the conglomerate, which now boasts an annual turnover of Fr210 billion (£21 billion), wants to become a European Time Warner.

Yesterday, M Messier said his group, whose interests in the UK range from healthcare to water provision, would increase its operating profit by 50 per cent a year over the next two years to reach Fr10 billion in 1999.

However, its old name, which it has born since its creation in 1853, was unsuitable in the new world of computers and cables. Hence the need M Messier to follow his British counterparts and call on corporate designers. Vivendi, which comes from the Latin verb *vivere*, to live, evokes "a more global notion of power and energy," said Marcel Botton, the chairman of Nomen, the French consultants who helped to chose the new title.

Having drawn up a list of nine names pronounceable in the 88 countries where the conglomerate has interests, M Botton sumbitted the candidates to focus groups of seven different nationalities.

Six, including the British, preferred Vivendi, with only the Chinese opting for another possible, Egery. The name will no doubt take time to catch on among the group's customers in provincial France, who like nothing more than tradition.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Four jailed for cheating Russian companies

TWO husband-and-wife teams, one Russian and one British, who made $2.4 million (£1.5 million) signing up hundreds of businesses in the former Soviet Union for a non-existent conference were jailed yesterday by Isleworth Crown Court. Svetlana Kouznetsova, 34, was sentenced to two years for conspiracy to defraud. Her husband, Igor Falkovsky, 35, received three years for money laundering. Michael Newman, 39, who was extradited from Switzerland, received three years for furnishing false information for accounting purposes. His wife, Maria, 31, received 18 months for conspiring to go *equipped to cheat*. She helped to prepare and mail documents.

The case was brought by the Serious Fraud Office and Thames Valley Police. The defendants admitted inducing 700 businesses in the former Soviet Union to pay travelling and accommodation costs for senior personnel to attend non-existent management seminars in California. Thousands of brochures printed in Reading, Berkshire, were used to entice businesses in Ukraine and Russia. The SFO is seeking confiscation orders to return the victims' money to them. Using a Bermudan company, the defendants asked for payments to be sent to accounts in London and Geneva.

Forward goes backward

FORWARD TECHNOLOGY, the audio and electronics group that disclosed it had received a takeover approach earlier this week, yesterday reported 1997 pre-tax losses of £2.5 million after an exceptional charge of almost £1.9 million against restructuring. Losses in 1996 amounted to £613,000. Losses were 7.3p a share (1.8p loss last time). There is no dividend (1.25p). The shares fell 1p to 14p yesterday, against a 12-month high of 30½p. Turnover fell to £51.4 million from £57.9 million.

New chief at Microgen

MICROGEN shares soared 30½p to 105p after the information management services group said its new executive chairman would be Martyn Ratcliffe, former general manager of Dell Computer Corporation's overseas operations. Mr Ratcliffe will invest £3.5 million in a 9.9 per cent stake in Microgen. Douglas Lee will continue as executive chairman until Mr Ratcliffe starts executive duties in August, when Mr Lee will become a director with a consultative role. Mr Ratcliffe will be granted options over one million new shares at 90p each.

Axa to promote brand

AXA, the insurer, has begun an £8 million advertising campaign to promote its companies in the UK under a single brand. Axa owns Axa Sun life, the third largest life and pension company whose direct sales arm, Axa Assurance, will be launched on Monday. It also owns Axa Direct, the home and motor insurer, which is changing its name from Prospero Direct. The UK holding company is Sun Life and Provincial Holdings, which is 72 per cent owned by Axa.

Phillips in US purchase

PHILLIPS, the fine art auctioneer, has acquired Selkirk's, a leading US auction house based in in St Louis. It is the first acquisition by the company since it was sold by Christopher Weston two months ago. Chris Thomson, the new chief executive, said the acquisition was the first step in a planned expansion programme that would create a network in key locations throughout North America. Selkirk's has dominated the market in the Mid West since it was founded in 1830. It has an annual turnover of $5 million (£3 million).

Queensborough steady

QUEENSBOROUGH HOLDINGS, the leisure group, returned same-again profits of £3.6 million for the year to January 31 on sales up from £30.3 million to £36.5 million. Earnings rose from 2.55p to 2.58p out of which the total dividend rises from 0.3p to 0.4p after payment of a 0.3p final. The shares remained unchanged at 25p. The company said it will concentrate in future on caravan parks and its new casual dining restaurants and that it had a net asset value of 41p per share.

Morland to shut brewery

MORLAND, the brewer, is to close its Langham brewery and take a writedown of up to £6 million. The exceptional charge takes account of the acquisition of Ruddles, which was bought, along with the Langham brewery, from Grolsch in September 1997. Morland said that a review of medium-term prospects concluded that major contract brewing agreements would be necessary but discussions with customers proved this would not be possible. Morland will also upgrade its Abingdon brewery at a cost of £1.5 million.

Oxford Molecular bid

OXFORD MOLECULAR GROUP, the developer of bioinformatics and molecular design software systems, has made an agreed £6.2 million bid for Chemical Design Holdings, which supplies drug database software. Oxford is offering 557 new shares for every 1,000 Chemical Design shares, valuing each share at 197½p. Keith Davies and his wife Mary Bogdiukiewicz, founders of Chemical Design, have agreed to accept 456 new Oxford shares for every 1,000 Chemical Design shares, valuing each share at 90p.

Compco sells retail park

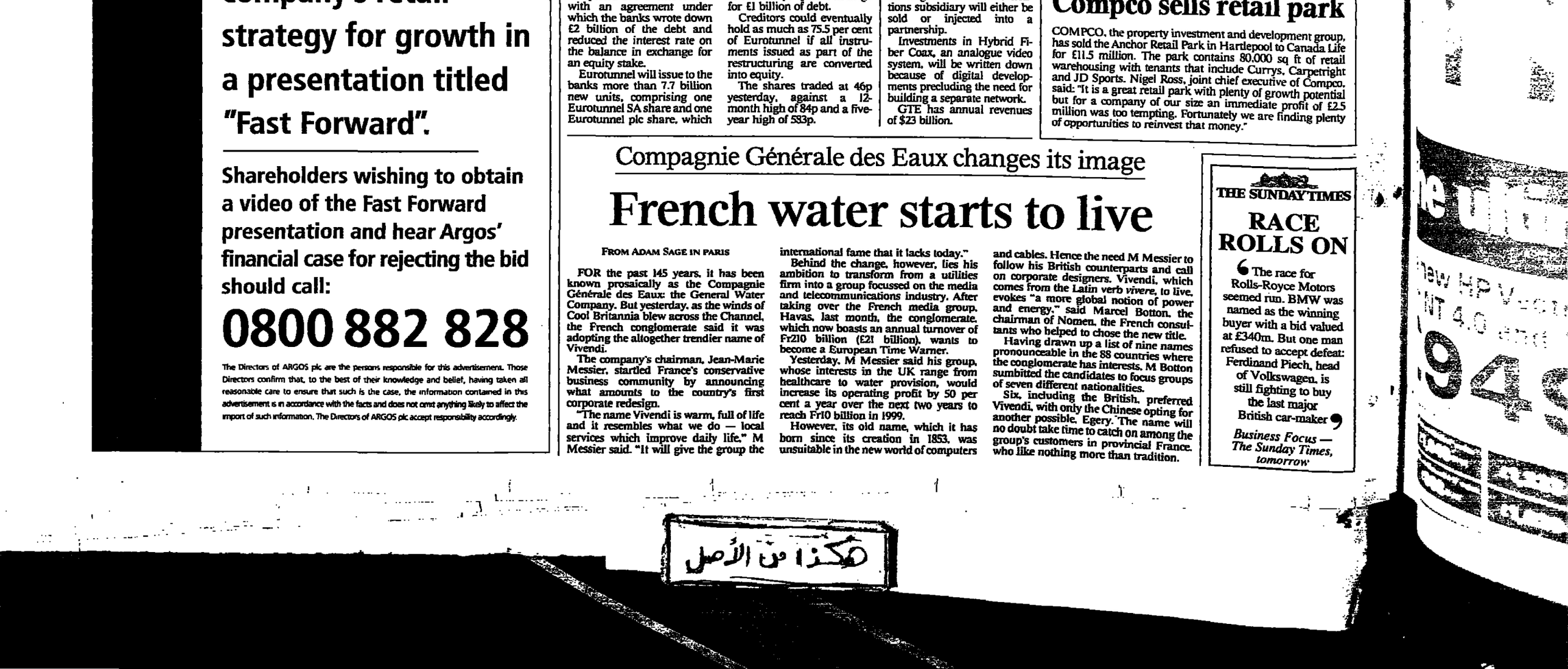
COMPCO, the property investment and development group, has sold the Anchor Retail Park in Hartlepool to Canada Life for £11.5 million. The park contains 80,000 sq ft of retail warehousing with tenants that include Currys, Carpetright and JD Sports. Nigel Ross, joint chief executive of Compco, said: "It is a great retail park with plenty of growth potential but for a company of our size an immediate profit of £2.5 million was too tempting. Fortunately we are finding plenty of opportunities to reinvest that money."

THE SUNDAY TIMES

RACE ROLLS ON

'The race for Rolls-Royce Motors seemed run. BMW was named as the winning buyer with a bid valued at £340m. But one man refused to accept defeat: Ferdinand Piech, head of Volkswagen, is still fighting to buy the last major British car-maker'

Business Focus — The Sunday Times, tomorrow



Self-promotion and shareholders

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

There are those who say that, with a few honourable exceptions, marketing services companies are run in the interests of their employees rather than their shareholders. Anybody who has worked at an advertising agency will testify what nice places they are to while away the few hours between 9am and 6pm, with the obligatory couple of hours for lunch. Coffee and wine bars in the office are virtually the norm. Office romances, far from being discouraged, as in most organisations, are seen as a perk. And while the top flight of advertising executives enjoy salary packages on a par with traders in the City or leaders of multibillion-pound corporations, investors seem to have to survive on a pretty meagre diet.

Over the years, the market has become increasingly depressed about advertising shares. A £1 put into Saatchi & Saatchi in 1986, would be worth less than 4p now. WPP shares plummeted to sorry depths before recovering to current heights, which have triggered millions of pounds in bonus payments for Martin Sorrell, the chief executive. And anyone who swallowed the story preached by Mike Greenlees when his GGT Group paid more than £100 million for BDDP, the Franco-American agency, will be glad that Omnicom, the US group, was there to pick up the pieces when the New York arm of BDDP fell apart six months after the GGT takeover. Mr Greenless has emerged from all of this with a five-year contract from Omnicom paying £500,000 a year, which shows that at least he did well out of the mess.

The other beneficiary of the GGT débâcle has been Saatchi & Saatchi, which picked up the £50 million a year account to promote Oil of Olay (as they spell it in the US) when Procter & Gamble took it away from BDDP. The Olay victory has oiled the wheels of Saatchi's share price, which is at last moving towards the 200p a share target that Bob Seelert, Saatchi's chief executive, set for it when he announced the demerger from Cordiant Communications.

Yesterday Saatchi also gave some indication that it might actually be breaking away from the "enrich the staff/bankrupt the investors" trap. The agency looks like settling down six months on from demerging from Cordiant and three years on from the dramatic departure of the firm's two founders and many of their friends. Lo and behold, Saatchi's financial results were encouraging — the first time this has happened for more than a decade — but more importantly the profit margin has jumped from 6 to 8.2 per cent. Now an 8.2 per cent profit margin might not seem too much to ask — particularly as the likes of WPP, which owns J Walter Thompson and Ogilvy & Mather, is achieving around 12 per cent. But it shows that Saatchi is at last paying attention to its investors' interest. Perhaps the massive share incentive scheme that Saatchi put in place for executives last year has something to do with this.

A very private railway

Few will pay much attention to the rail regulator's portentous provisos to the plan to upgrade the West Coast main line. From the Deputy Prime Minister down, all concerned are desperate to get some big rail project off the drawing board. This includes Richard Branson of Virgin Rail, whose much-touted involvement in the fast link to the Channel has proved so ignominious and whose train services have so far been embarrassing.

The innovative revenue-sharing deal between Virgin Rail and Railtrack looks messy but inevitable. British Rail was privatised in a pattern that is simply not geared to major projects that have to tie operations in with infrastructure improvements.

Evidently, most of the investment will be coming from Railtrack. If the industry's private structure otherwise works as it should, Virgin should be able to lease new tilting trains to take advantage of Railtrack's cash.

The Railtrack deal should, however, allow Mr Branson to capitalise the possible future profits by floating Virgin Rail in the summer should he wish. The runes suggest that he is extremely keen to do so. Indeed, he might well care to float anything, whether or not it moves, in order to please outside shareholders and move on to projects new. Candidates could include Virgin Cinemas, the remaining communications businesses and anything else that would pass muster.

Virgin Rail has been a likely candidate ever since flotations of other rail operators proved so profitable for their promoters. Given Mr Branson's amazingly high esteem, according to all those daft polls, there is every reason to think that younger members of the investing public could hardly get their cheque books out fast enough.

That is not to say that they or Mr Branson would be wise. All should remember that he had a public company before. One of the entrepreneur's wisest decisions was to take it private again. Mr Branson and the City's tedious ways do not mix well. In recent years he has developed Virgin into a business whose central and key asset is its brand name, which Mr Branson needs to control.

Investors usually live to regret owning minority interest in companies controlled by an idiosyncratic individual, however brilliant. Perhaps that is why the outside shareholders in Virgin Rail, led by Merrill Lynch, are so keen to have a route out and count their profits.

RAC up a windfall

The unseemly row about whether the RAC should demutualise follows a pattern this newspaper has been predicting for a while. Democracy was never likely to reign when the prospect of a £20,000 windfall for members of the Pall Mall club was in the offing. The "associate members", who pay upwards of £50 a year for roadside rescue, will be left with nothing once the bounty is handed out to the "full members", who pay between £454 and £623 a year to swim, play golf and drink in pretty sumptous surroundings.

Though the actions by Jeffrey Rose, the outgoing chairman, appear to be a classic pre-emptive strike to preserve the privileges of the privileged, he has to be commended for bringing the debate to a head. The RAC, and for that matter the AA, are facing challenging times, where the opportunities for growth are mouthwatering, particularly in financial services, but the competition is becoming increasingly fierce. Being a public company will help the RAC at this time — just as it has helped some of the more intelligent former building societies, like Northern Rock and Halifax. It would also help the AA, Bupa and, one might dare to suggest, some parts of the Co-operative movement.

But if the rows about ownership of the RAC are anything to go by, AA, Bupa and Co-op members should not hold their breath waiting for their bonanzas. Indeed, if I were a full member of the RAC, I would not be putting my champagne on ice just yet.

Viva who?

THE appalling fashion to reduce famous companies to anonymous, indistinguishable initials has given way to a new one to adopt the bland labels given to cars. France's vastly ambitious Companie Générale des Eaux has more flare at Cortinaisation than British groups that vanished into Arriva, Cordiant or Diageo. But Vivendi does not quite convey the claimed "global notion of power and energy". Why not just drop "des Eaux"?

Rescued Costain forecasts an end to run of losses

By Chris Ayres

COSTAIN, the refocused engineering and construction company recently saved by Skanska of Sweden after a year-long share suspension, yesterday said that it expected to break even within the next 12 months.

The relatively upbeat tone came as the company reported a fall in pre-tax losses from £62.3 million to £7.4 million. Sales fell by about 23 per cent, from £744 million to £571 million, mainly because of disposals made by the company.

John Armitt, chief executive, said that Costain was on tender lists for work worth £450 million in Hong Kong and he also disclosed a £25 million joint venture deal with Shell.

Mr Armitt said that the suspension of Costain shares for such a long time had hit trading, but added: "We have witnessed an increase in the number and quality of invitations to tender for projects, which is an early but welcome sign of recovery for Costain."

Costain said that short-term prospects in South-East Asia had "diminished" and that the company had not been significantly hit by the strength of sterling.

It added that the Government's Private Finance Initiative programme remained a key part of its strategy, and that it was bidding for projects jointly with Skanska.

Shares in Costain were suspended at 46p between November 1996 and November 1997 because of financial difficulties and uncertainties over the disposal of the company's US coal business. The shares yesterday rose 1p, to 28½p.

Alan Lovell resigned as Costain's chief executive last April, taking a controversial £360,000 payoff with him, on top of a £550,000 total pay package.

Mr Armitt was appointed as his successor with a more modest £200,000 salary, although he stands to gain a bonus worth 150 per cent of his annual salary if Costain meets certain unspecified performance targets.

After Costain's rescue, Skanska, which is one of Europe's largest construction companies, emerged with a 7.6 per cent stake in the enlarged group.

Skanska has the option to raise its shareholding to 40 per cent over three years. This would trigger an automatic bid, but there have been no indications yet that the Swedish company intends to buy Costain. Costain has a number of other significant foreign investors from Malaysia, Kuwait and America.

Costain's boardroom has been described as resembling the General Assembly of the United Nations, but Mr Armitt says that the decision-making process has not suffered as a result.

The company's losses per share fell from 51.7p to 3.5p. Mr Amitt said that a dividend payment would be unlikely for the next two years.

Monument Oil sets out terms for rights issue

By Carl Mortished

MONUMENT Oil & Gas is seeking opportunities in Iran and Azerbaijan to complement its base in Turkmenistan. The exploration group yesterday revealed the terms of a £96 million rights issue at 55p per share, aimed at raising funds for the development of the Burun field in Turkmenistan as well as the Fyne field in the North Sea.

Monument is in late-stage negotiations over a billion-barrel oil prospect in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian. The Inam field is in shallow water, 30 kms offshore and Monument is competing with Amoco and Central Fuels, a Russian oil company for a production sharing agreement. The company also intends to enter the forthcoming Iranian buy-back round. Referring to the US sanctions legislation, Tony Craven-Walker, the chairman of Monument, said: "We very nearly did a deal last year. We have deliberately avoided developing US interests."

Monument announced the rights issue on Tuesday, and since then has secured firm commitments to take up rights from investors holding 54 per cent of the shares, avoiding the need to underwrite their entitlement to the 1 for 4 issue. The remainder of the shares are being underwritten by tender.

Monument shares fell 1¼p to 59¾p on confirmation of the cash call.

Tempus, page 31



Craven-Walker: deal



SUZANNE HUBBARD

Michael Kidd, Lawrence Ward and model Jeanne Frith

Martin at the double

MARTIN International, the designer and manufacturer of underwear, lingerie, knitwear and casualwear, raised pre-tax profits by 94 per cent to £2.42 million in the year to December 31 on sales up from £111.4 million to £122 million (George Sivell writes).

Earnings at Martin, whose chief executive is Lawrence Ward, rose from 2.2p to 4.5p out of which the total dividend goes up from 1.1p to 1.3p after payment of a 0.8p final. Michael Kidd, chairman, said: "We have made a good start to the year in terms of production and orders." The shares rose from 41p to 43p.

Freeport in cash call to fund development

By Kathy Lipari

FREEPORT LEISURE, the outlet shopping and leisure village operator, yesterday announced it will raise £63.3 million in a rights issue to fund the development of its three new shopping and leisure sites.

The issue will involve 20.15 million new shares on a one-for-one basis at a price of 325p.

The proceeds will go towards the acquisition and development of the Freeport Village Braintree, Freeport Village Yorkshire and a joint venture with United Norwest Co-operatives to build an outlet shopping mall in Newcastle-under-Lyme. Freeport already operates three outlet village sites.

The company will also use a £14 million banking facility to fund the balance of its expansion plans. The Braintree site, scheduled to open in the summer of 1999, will require a total investment of £32.2 million, while Yorkshire, opening at the end of 1999, will cost £41.8 million and its joint venture, £21.4 million.

Sean Collidge, chief executive, said the demand for shopping and leisure sites had exceeded all expectations.

He said: "There has been a phenomenal response from the public since we started four years ago and we have accelerated our expansion accordingly."

Mr Collidge said trading in the year so far was well ahead of last year and the trend of significant profit and turnover increases appeared to be continuing.

The company said it would own and operate more outlet and shopping sites than any other group in the UK after the developments are completed.

The rights issue has been underwritten by Merrill Lynch International. Freeport shares closed 3p lower at 380½p yesterday.

Tempus, page 31

Meyer issues warning

By Kathy Lipari

MEYER International, the building materials group, told analysts that its second-half performance in the year to March had been "satisfactory" but warned the market that plunging timber prices had affected all of its operations.

Jewson, the builders merchants business acquired at the end of last year, had benefited from improved trading conditions as a result of mild weather in January and February. Sales in the specialist products division had been good.

However, its PontMeyer operations had been hampered by the implementation of an information technology project that will not be completed until mid-1998.

The expanded Jewson division and an underlying 4 per cent growth in refurbishment and maintenance activity was expected to be a key driver of profits in 1998-99.

The recent purchase of the DIY chain Hacros was also proceeding according to plan with margins improving.

Alan Peterson, chief executive, said the board was pleased with current progress but was still searching for laminate acquisition opportunities in the US. Meyer shares fell ½p to 395p.

Grabiner case to get full hearing in High Court

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

THE High Court yesterday ordered a full hearing on the dispute between British Digital Broadcasting and United News and Media over the future employment of Stephen Grabiner.

Lord Hollick's United last month obtained an interim injunction against Mr Grabiner, an executive director of the company in charge of its newspaper operations, preventing him joining BDB until his existing contract runs out on January 26, 1999.

BDB is the main commercial digital terrestrial television company planning to launch at least 12 new channels in the "last quarter" of this year.

Its shareholders are Carlton Communications and Granada, with United, major players in the ITV network.

BDB failed to overturn the injunction in a hearing in chambers yesterday but won a rapid court hearing. The issue will be dealt with on April 28.

Until the issue is resolved, Mr Grabiner is unable to join BDB but he has not worked at United for some weeks.

Recently Lord Hollick reached agreement with David Arculus, another senior United executive, enabling him to become chairman of the IPC magazine group. In Mr Grabiner's case the sensitivity seems to arise from the fact that Carlton and Granada are United's ITV rivals.

Now that an early date has been set for a full hearing, there is little incentive for negotiations to get underway. If BDB lost the full hearing, however, it might be forced to negotiate a deal to try to get Mr Grabiner in place before the digital terrestrial service actually launches.



Grabiner: sensitive case

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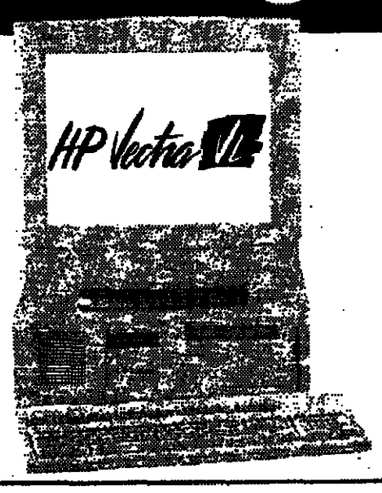
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Campaign to take the naff out of Naafi starts to pay off

Alasdair Murray and **Michael Evans** on the changing face of the institution the Forces loved to hate

When the Naafi is mentioned, conflicting images come to mind. From the entertainment troupe in *It Ain't Half Hot Mum* to the dismal canteen scene in Arnold Wesker's *Chips With Everything*, the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes has a reputation for poor food, dour service and dull premises. But after a series of false starts, including a flirtation with one of the most controversial companies to hit the stock market in recent years, the Naafi has been transformed into a modern high street-style retail business, and is about to announce its second year of profits.

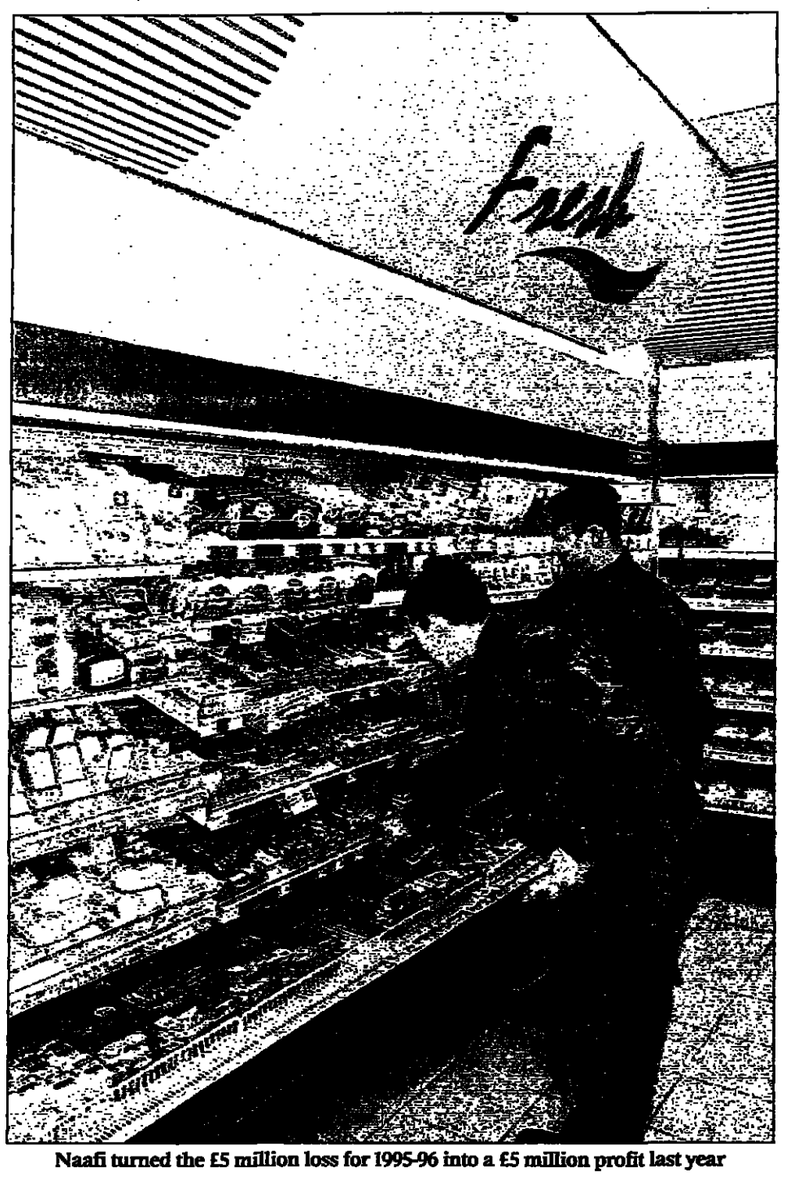
For most of this century, Naafi had quietly got on with its job of supplying food and entertainment for troops at home and on tour. The Forces loved to moan about its reputation for providing rock-hard joints of meat, sloppy potatoes and stewed tea — despite the introduction of a 16-page guide in 1943 on how to brew the perfect cuppa.

It was established in 1921, in response to scandals about the inflated profits unscrupulous businessmen had made from supplying shoddy food to the forces in the First World War. Although not directly controlled by the Ministry of Defence, it is run and owned as a co-operative by the Forces, ploughing back any profits into the Services. By the eve of the Second World War it was one of the largest catering operations in the world, apparently owning the world's largest pantry. It had sufficiently lodged itself in the nation's consciousness that King George V called upon the Naafi to supply catering at Buckingham Palace in 1931, as an act of sympathy for those suffering in the Depression. In 1952, when Eisenhower retired as Supreme Allied Commander for Forces in Europe, it was the Naafi that was awarded the honour of cooking for his farewell banquet in Paris.

The end of the Cold War and the growing pressure for MoD budget cuts, however, placed the Naafi under the spotlight. The organisation appeared stuck in a timewarp. Market research suggested that only 10 per cent of Service personnel were using Naafi retail outlets as their main source of shopping. Although the Naafi had always managed to return a modest profit, serious questions were beginning to be raised about its efficiency.

Four years ago the MoD decided to tighten the Naafi's commercial basis, drawing up separate contracts to cover its main areas of expertise, including shops, leisure facilities and food supplies. Naafi's future looked assured, although it was going to have to learn quickly to act in a more competitive environment. Other non-core businesses were placed on the chopping block. Last April Naafi sold its financial services arm, which provided specialist insurance and financial products to the Forces, saying the business was now outside its welfare remit. The business was bought for £104 million by a management-led consortium, Warrior Group, backed by HSBC Private Equity.

Then there was a troubled foray into mail order. The Naafi entered the business in late 1996, teaming up with the then unknown quoted outfit Lanica, headed by a young, ambitious businessmen called Andrew Regan. Lanica paid £162,500 for a 55 per cent stake in the business, with Naafi holding 30 per cent and Ian Ryden, managing director of the catalogue business, the rest. The partners dreamt of building up the business, called Select Catalogues, with the eventual target of a stock market flotation. Select had secured exclusive rights to direct-sell non-food products to 250,000 Service personnel.



Naafi turned the £5 million loss for 1995-96 into a £5 million profit last year

Mr Regan, however, also had other, larger targets in his sights. He mounted a £1.2 billion bid for the Co-operative food businesses, sending shares in Lanica soaring from £1 to £19.50 at their peak. This valued the company, which then had only the Select business under its control, at nearly £100 million. The bid came unstuck, amid recriminations about Mr Regan's business practices, and Lanica shares were suspended.

Last May Mr Regan stepped down from the board of Select after a severe rebuke from a High Court judge who described his behaviour in the Co-op affair as "clearly dishonest". In August the deal collapsed, with Lanica agreeing to sell back its stake for £1. Mr Regan insisted that "critical press reports" had undermined his position, leading the Naafi to get cold feet about the deal. The Naafi denied this, claiming instead that Lanica had been unable to supply the required capital on acceptable terms. Whatever the reason for failure of the Select tie-up, it was another disaster for Lanica and Mr Regan, leaving his company to take a substantial hit from the costs of the original venture. Lanica shares remain suspended.

The £400 million food contract was also an unmitigated disaster. The Naafi had supplied only 40 per cent of the Forces' food, the rest being provided by other MoD agencies, and it found that it did not have the technical systems to deal with such a mammoth operation. Supplies were arriving late to bases around the world, forcing Service staff to rush out to high street stores to make up for the shortfall.

The embarrassment proved too much for James Rucker, a former brigadier in the Queen's Own Hussars, who had assumed control of operations. He resigned just seven weeks after Naafi assumed control of the contract. MPs on the Defence Select Committee were also quick to take action to try to resolve what they termed a "minor debacle". The National Audit Office issued a damning report and called for the contract to be put out to tender. Booker Foodservice Group was awarded the new contract and the Naafi was left to face a future without its traditional food supply role — and cut 2,000 jobs.

The loss of the contract has proved to be the spur for Naafi to modernise. Within weeks it unveiled a restructuring plan. Naafi would give up trying to provide an integrated retail supply service and concentrate on simply staffing and managing its shops. It agreed a supply contract with Spar, the Dutch-owned retail giant, to provide its shops with branded products. Spar was also to lend its expertise overhauling the design of its retail outlets, which were to be franked by Naafi's smart new red and green logo.

Under the leadership of a senior executive from Marks & Spencer, a former managing director of WH Smith and an ex-RAF air commodore, Naafi plans to provide the Services with an expanded choice of shops and fast-food outlets, including setting up McDonald's and Burger King franchised restaurants in bases and garrisons. Last year the restyled Naafi organisation converted the £5 million losses of 1995-96 into a £5 million profit, and this success is expected to continue this year.

Geoffrey Dart, divisional director of Marks & Spencer, who is seconded to Naafi as chief executive for the next two years, carried out an independent review and has already spent £10 million improving the shops and junior rates clubs in the UK, and another £5 million in Germany. David Roberts, formerly with WH Smith, is the chairman of Naafi, and Air Commodore Allan Vaughan is corporate affairs director.

This week Mr Dart said the key to the success was matching the Naafi facilities to the lifestyle of servicemen and women. He found Naafi shops filled with groceries that no one ever bought. Under the partnership with Spar, he began modernising the 200 Naafi shops in the UK and the 60 in Germany, filling the shelves with snack foods and videos. "Naafi shops were known as naff shops, but not any more," Mr Dart said.

The Naafi clubs for junior rates are also being converted as pub-style facilities through a partnership with Bass and Scottish Courage, offering softer lighting, games sections, large television screens with sports events and still a pint of beer for only 99p. Fifteen clubs have been converted so far. The 200 clubs in the UK and 30 in Germany should all be converted by the end of next year.

The Naafi at last seems to be on the right lines. And it is not only the soldiers, sailors and aircrew who hope it is not a false dawn.

Why Wolfson must make catalogue choice add up

IN THE HOT SEAT

Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale is probably having one of the most difficult weekends of his life. The chairman of Great Universal Stores (GUS) has to decide how much he wants Argos. Is he going to increase his 570p cash bid, and if he does, just how high will he go?

It would be hard for anyone in his position to decide what to do, but some of his characteristics will make it especially hard. His admirers describe him as decisive, energetic and focused. Those less fond of him call him arrogant, egotistical and ruthless. Either way, there is general agreement that it would be extraordinarily difficult for him to walk away from his attempt to buy Argos, and equally difficult to be seen to overpay.

The market has decided that he will increase the bid, driving shares in Argos up to 80p over his initial offer, while Argos is rather cheekily pointing to at least 700p a share. As a good Thatcherite — he was the former Prime Minister's chief of staff for six years — Lord Wolfson knows that it is useless trying to buck the market. But he is clearly frustrated that Argos's vigorous defence, and the view of investors that he is desperate to clinch the deal have pushed the Argos share price so high. His hope is that leading investors, who will ultimately decide whether to accept his final bid, will ignore the froth and decide that his cash is worth more than the promises made by Argos.

Lord Wolfson took over as chairman of GUS in the summer of 1996. GUS, which had been run by his cousin, Lord Wolfson of Marylebone, was known as one of the great sleeping giants of British business, and the younger Wolfson's appointment inspired excitement in the City.

Lord Wolfson the younger, in partnership with David Jones, had managed a remarkable corporate recovery with Next and already knew GUS well, having worked at the group before 1978.

His work at Next had made him one of the most admired retailers in Britain, although he is not typical of the breed. Most retailers are as good at selling themselves as the goods in their shops, but Lord Wolfson has never seemed to see the need. Put another way, if the world were divided into gentlemen and players, most retailers would put themselves in the players' camp. Lord Wolfson would undoubtedly be one of the gentlemen.

His manner has not made him universally popular. "He reminds me of Ralph Halpern in his heyday. He has a big ego," commented one industry insider, who nonetheless counts himself as a Wolfson fan. Another said: "He is almost brilliant, but also has amazing flaws. At GUS, he is chairman, chief executive and autocrat."

GUS had not made any acquisitions since 1969 and the expectation was that the new Lord Wolfson in charge would somehow change the group — with its massive cash pile and huge, if declining, mail-order business — overnight. His first big move had nothing to do with the retail side of GUS. Lord Wolfson began whittling down the cash pile at GUS by buying some pricey credit information businesses in the US.

CV: LORD WOLFSON

Born: 1935
Educated: Clifton College, Trinity College, Cambridge, MBA at Stanford University
1960-78: GUS
1978: Secretary to Shadow Cabinet
1979-85: Chief of staff, 10 Downing Street
1982-86: chairman of Alexon Group
1985-87: director of Wrightson Holdings
1989-90: Next director
1990-1998: Next chairman
1996-: GUS chairman

The acquisitions were well received but questions were still being asked about what Lord Wolfson was going to do with the home-shopping division. No one suggested it would be an easy fix, as GUS is too big to be allowed to buy any of its rival mail-order businesses.

Argos, which is a catalogue retailer but is based on the high street, had been one of the most highly regarded retail stocks. However, two bad Christmases on the trot had caused it to fall out of favour and its shares suddenly looked affordable.



Wolfson: "GUS autocrat"

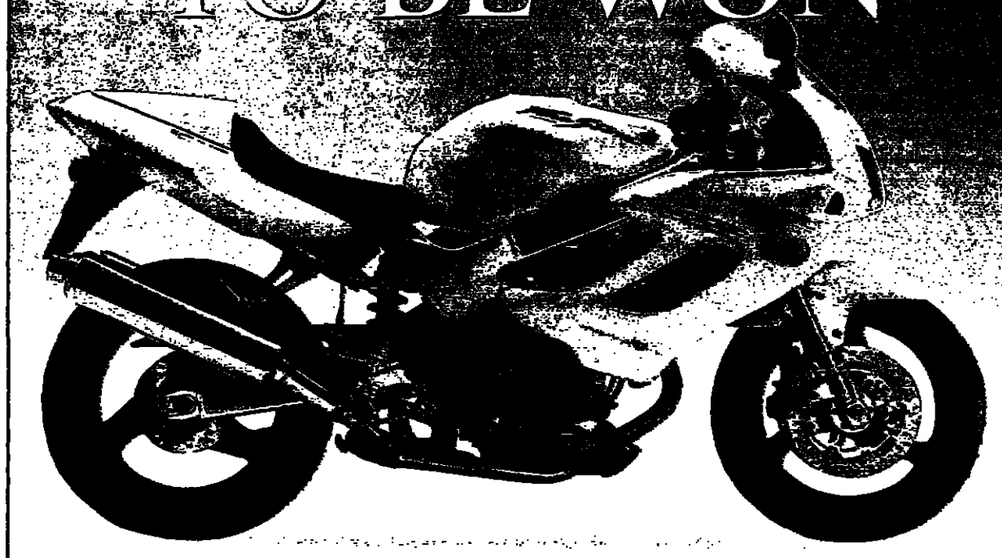
The announcement, issued soon after Lord Wolfson had made his bid, that Mike Smith was to step down as chief executive of Argos because of ill-health certainly enhanced Lord Wolfson's reputation for ruthlessness, although his advisers say he was not aware of the situation when the offer was launched.

Lord Wolfson's reputation as a retailer was called into question recently because Next, with exquisitely bad timing, issued a profits warning. To restore his reputation, and also prove himself capable of moving GUS into the next century, Lord Wolfson must get this deal right.

SARAH CUNNINGHAM

AN EXCLUSIVE PRIZE DRAW THE TIMES

FOUR HONDAS TO BE WON



To celebrate Honda's 50th anniversary, *The Times* offers readers the chance to win one of four sensational bikes.

THE PRIZES ARE:
- ONE OF TWO HONDA HORNETS
- A HONDA VTR 1000 FIRESTORM AND
- A HONDA VT750C SHADOW

Honda created the modern superbike era and the FireStorm (above) was their first supersports V-twin. It appeals to riders of all levels of skill and experience through its blend of performance, neutral but quick steering and inexhaustible supply of torque through the rev range.

HOW TO ENTER

You need all six differently numbered tokens published in *The Times* this week. Attach them to the prize draw entry form, right. You can enter as many times as you wish but no photocopied tokens or entry forms will be accepted. The closing date for entries is Tuesday April 21, 1998.

THE TIMES HONDA PRIZE DRAW TOKEN 6

THE TIMES/HONDA PRIZE DRAW ENTRY FORM

Complete this form and attach six differently numbered tokens from *The Times*. Post it, to arrive by Monday April 21, 1998, to: *The Times*/Honda Prize Draw, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 7GX.

Title ____ Initials ____
Surname ____
Address ____
Postcode ____
Day tel ____

1. On which days do you usually buy *The Times*?
Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐
Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐
Don't usually buy The Times ☐
2. Which other National Daily Newspaper(s) do you buy at least once a week?
3. Which National Sunday Newspaper(s) do you buy almost always (3-4 copies per month)?
4. Which National Sunday Newspaper(s) do you buy quite often (1-2 copies per month)?

Tick if you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by *The Times* ☐ Toyota ☐

THERE IS STILL A CHANCE TO WIN A TOYOTA — SEE PAGE 45

CHANGING TIMES

Advantage

GILES VARDEY, the genius behind the Stock Exchange's wildly unpopular order-driven trading system, has resurfaced as chief executive designate of Greig Middleton, the private client stockbroker. Followers of Vardey's volatile career will recall that he quit Fidelity at the beginning of the year, just days before it pulled out of stockbroking.

Vardey, who has a reputation as a bit of a computer boffin, joined Fidelity last May after losing out in the battle to become chief executive of the Stock Exchange. That job went instead to Gavin Casey, formerly of Merrill Lynch. Private client stockbrokers have complained bitterly about the impact of SETS, the order-driven system, on their business. Greig Middleton can only hope that its architect is able to make head or tail of SETS. Most other brokers gave up long ago.

● *WHAT is it about Americans? Hard to imagine any of our home-grown megalomaniacs would introduce themselves thus. But a collection of the sayings of Jack Welch, the man who so ruthlessly downsized General Electric Corporation, is to be published. "Jack Welch speaks. Wisdom from the World's Greatest Business Leader." Sample: "I don't mind being wrong. The key is to win a lot more than you lose." The wisdom of Solomon indeed.*

Checking in

WHATEVER their tendency towards megalomania, the Americans seem remarkably fond of the European hotel industry. Various investment trusts have been sniffing around. We've seen Blackstone Group join the fray for the Savoy Group and Strategic Hotel Capital team up with the rather less glamorous Stakis.

Now I hear that Maritz Wolff, a St Louis-based investor, has hired MartenFoxon, the former Forte Hotels property director, to set up an office in London. Maritz Wolff is unlikely to sit on its hands for long, even if Foxon assures me: "I don't think we'll be buying the Savoy."

In transit

NO SLEAZE at US Airways. A collection of the great and the influential were at a lunch with the American carrier this week to celebrate its inaugural flight between Philadelphia and London.

US Airways has to fly into Gatwick from the US, and Stephen Wolf, its chief executive, is not at all happy at being denied access to Heathrow. After the lunch, an envelope went around offering two free air tickets to the US. The catch, as Sir John Egan of BAA and various MPs discovered, was that the tickets had to be given to a charity of their choice.

● *A NOSTALGIC frisson as I scan the sits vac pages of* The Guardian *and come across an appeal for volunteers, skilled and unskilled, to restore the radio ship* Ross Revenge, *off the Isle of Sheppey. The aim is to recreate, legally this time, I assume, Radio Caroline. Food, board, insurance and "some broadcasting chances available for volunteers". Life on the ocean wave is obviously going to be as wild and whacky as it was in the old pirate ships, because the ad goes on: "Also needed, funraisers" (sic).*

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Bug court

"THE millennium bug. Am I given to believe we are dealing with some sort of insect?" "No, your honour, it is a widely forecast computer problem having to do with the turn of the century." An engaging fantasy, but it seems that the tribunal chairmen chosen by the City Disputes Panel for the special body that will resolve disputes over the millennium bug are almost all judges.

Three from the Court of Appeal, Lord Mustill, Sir Christopher Staughton and Sir John Balcombe, plus a brace of common or garden judges and a lowly silk. The body has been given the inelegant name the CDP Y2K Panel, which sounds like a robot from *Star Wars*. "Star Wars?" "A cinematic entertainment much favoured by the lower orders, your honour."

MARTIN WALLER

STOCK MARKET FRASER NELSON



Late rush for Peps takes index to another record

A LAST-MINUTE rush for personal equity plans made for another manic day for London blue chips, lifting the FTSE 100 index to its third successive high with more than one billion shares changing hands.

Dealers said that private shareholders had provided almost half of the demand for shares as the institutions took a back seat against the backdrop of the economic turmoil in Japan.

The FTSE 100 index edged ahead another 11.4 points to close at 6,064.2, having broken the 6,100 barrier in early morning trading. Second-line stocks and smaller-company shares also rose, helping the FTSE All-share index to close at a new high of 2,832.37.

Such was the demand that SBC Warburg managed to rid itself of the shares in **Orange** left over from its attempt to place British Aerospace's 16.1 per cent stake. The shares jumped 27p to a new high of 428p as 44.75 million shares changed hands. Just under 40 million of these came from Warburg.

Reports emanated from the US that Citicorp has held takeover talks with **Standard Chartered**. They did not greatly excite London dealers and shares of the bank gained only 4p to 864p.

British Energy was another favourite for Pep-hunters. The company's shares added 33p to 585p after confirming that two of its power stations have had their lives extended by five years.

Shares of **Tesco** have had a bullish run of late, and levels of 600p were enough to make even its most steadfast City supporters feel a bit nervous.

They suffered a worrying fall in the afternoon, tumbling 6 per cent to 563p. Late trading helped them to close only 7p off at 589½p. It reports in a fortnight and analysts are expecting an impressive, but not spectacular, peformance.

This is exactly what was delivered by **Saatchi & Saatchi**, up 70 per cent in the last two months. Its shares eased 5½p to 167p yesterday and **Cordiant**, the other half of the January demerger, slipped 1½p to 134½p.

Martyn Ratcliffe, former general manager of Dell Europe, yesterday said that he has packed it all in to become head of **Microgen Holdings**, a struggling £30 million microfilm producer. He intends to make a mint out of Microgen and has agreed to pay £3.5 million for a near-10 per cent stake. Moreover, he intends to buy them at 90p apiece — a sharp advance on its Thursday closing price of 74½p.

The City went berserk. Almost 10 per cent of its floating stock changed hands and the shares closed at 110p. This was a 48 per cent rise — the best performance of the day. Mr Ratcliffe intends to ditch microfilm and concentrate on in-house company databases — a similar direction to **Dialog Corporation**, whose shares have jumped to 350p from 43p when it was called Maid. They eased ½p to 166½p yesterday.

A similar transformation is hoped for at **Norman Hay**, taking a breather by slipping 2½p to 49p after rising 27 per cent on Thursday. Word is that Roger Seelig, recruited to the board after being acquitted of fraud for his part in the Guinness scandal, is about to turn the company from comatose to hyperactive.

In September it pocketed £7 million from selling its plant near Heathrow. The City has been waiting for a deal, but the best that the current management has managed is to buy a controlling stake in InterWorld Access — only to see the business go bust five months later.

The company still has the cash, yet its market capitalisation stands at £7.7 million. Mr Seelig is expected to take control soon, start making large acquistions and prompt a sharp re-rating of the shares.

Some radical changes are also expected at **Vero Group**, off 1½p at 114p. Shares of the electrics minnow have bounced from 78p in the last three months, and some dealers are stocking up in preparation for more growth next week.

The information technology sector has advanced a touch more cautiously this week, and it was not a good time for **Rolfe & Nolan** to admit that Sunguard, its potential suitor, has walked through fear of a customer revolt and Monopolies and Mergers Commission referral.

Rolfe & Nolan's shares immediately plunged 147½p to 325p, their lowest level since the new year.

This proved a trigger for a touch more profit-taking. **MMT Computing** dropped 10p to 970, **Misys** dropped another 20p to close at £28 and **Sage Group** slid 7½p to £13.65.

SBC Warburg has been extolling the virtues of the IT sector and recently flew a group of analysts to France to demonstrate the European growth potential. This provided a fillip to **Admiral**, up 42½p to a new high of 1072½p, and the Anglo-French **Sema Groupo**, up 7½p to £23.92½.

On the Alternative Investment Market, meanwhile, there was a last-minute rush for companies which qualify for re-investment relief on capital gains tax — a luxury being abolished on Monday.

The favourites have included **Dobbies Garden Centre**, steady at 375p; **Waterfall Holdings**, off 1½p at 97½p; **Prism Rail**, up 10p to 462½p; and **Access Plus**, steady at 255p.

The question now facing dealers is how much the prices of these companies were supported by their special tax status — and a few of them face the danger of a price collapse next week.

□ GILT-EDGED: Weak payroll data from the US delivered a healthy boon in the futures pit. Long gilts rose $^{7}/_{16}$ to £109¼ on healthy volume of 112,000. Longs outperformed shorts as Treasury 7 per cent 2002 ended $^{3}/_{16}$ at £103¼ and Treasury 8 per cent 2021 jumped $^{11}/_{16}$ to £129$^{9}/_{16}$.

□ NEW YORK: The Dow Jones industrial average broke through the 9,000 level for the first time but then fell back as the milestone failed to galvanize investors. After rising as high as 9,031 the Dow was off 19.43 points at 8,967.21 at midday.



Bob Seelert, who demerged Saatchi & Saatchi from Cordiant

Tony Marchington, head of Oxford Molecular, has received a cold reception for his £6.71 million paper offer for rival Chemical Design Holdings (CDH). The takeover, detailed in yesterday's market report, has knocked Oxford's shares down 4p to 193½p and has taken CDH down 8p to 102p.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
Chiroscience	331p	+68p	Licenses drug to Zeneca
Courtaulds	465½p	+104½p	Takeover approach
Saatchi & Saatchi	167p	+19p	Good results
Energis	707½p	+136p	European joint venture agreed
National Grid	388p	+34p	Stake in Energis
Misys	£28.00	-220p	Profit-taking in IT sector
Laird Group	426p	-46p	Disappointing results
BAT Industries	545p	-70p	Fears of fresh US litigation
Save Group	89p	-14½p	Profits hit by petrol price war

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	8967.21 (-19.43)
S&P Composite	1121.00 (+0.99)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	15517.78 (-185.12)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	11052.68 (-137.03)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	1162.12 (+9.09)

Sydney:

AO	2770.8 (+13.8)

Frankfurt:

DAX	5223.52 (-46.86)

Singapore:

Straits	1551.51 (-17.09)

Brussels:

General	17871.23 (+39.07)

Paris:

CAC-40	3932.02 (-3.86)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	1549.60 (+9.70)

London:

FT 30	3872.4 (+33.3)
FTSE 100	6064.2 (+11.4)
FTSE 250	5557.6 (+12.8)
FTSE 350	2907.0 (+5.7)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2883.08 (+18.28)
FTSE All-Share	2832.37 (+5.39)
FTSE Non Financials	2817.67 (+9.15)
FTSE Fixed Interest	142.27 (+0.55)
FTSE Govt Secs	105.41 (+0.35)
Bargains	100913
SEAQ Volume	1111.8m
US$	1.6603 (-0.0089)
German Mark	3.0679 (-0.0180)
Exchange Index	107.9 (-0.6)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.5525
£:SDR	1.2549
RPI	160.3 Feb (3.4%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	158.5 Feb (2.6%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

Aberdeen Cnvtble C	99½	...
Advent 2 VCT	102	...
Baronsmead VCT 2	98	...
Bass B	85	- 11½
Eurotunnel 01/03 Wts	4½	...
Express Dairies	183½	- 2½
Guardian IT	492½	+ 62½
Hartford Grp	3	...
Monsoon	198½	...
Oxford Asymmetry	452½	- 1
Peel Hotels	105½	...
Quester VCT 2	90	...
Safestore	72½	- 2½
VI Group	52½	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Cap & Regnl n/p (280)	10	- 2½
Oxford Bio n/p (10)	5½	...
Westbury n/p (235)	11½	- 2

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Security & Gen	65½p (+19p)
Clydeport Ops	178½p (+18p)
Orange	428p (+27p)
British Energy	585p (+33p)
Vodafone	659p (+30p)
Euro Telecom	303p (+13p)
Cosalt	235½p (+10p)
Geest	514p (+21½p)
Dalgety	369p (+15p)
Glynwed	291½p (+11p)
Druck	285p (+10p)
Unilever	628p (+20p)

FALLS:

Rolfe & Nolan	325p (-147½p)
LSH	125½p (-8p)
Ramco Energy	680p (-20p)
Laird	426p (-10½p)
National Power	573p (-27p)
BAT	545p (-25p)
Hepworth	238p (-10½p)
United Biscuits	245p (-10p)
Cap & Regional	287½p (-10p)
LASMO	265p (-9p)
Antofagasta	305p (-10p)
Powell Duffryn	531p (-16½p)
Racal Elect	333p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 26

TEMPUS

A Universal truth

ARGOS has put up a much more vigorous fight than was first expected when Great Universal Stores made its 570p a share bid.

Much of the credit has to go to new chief executive Stuart Rose who has raised expectations that GUS will increase its bid. The return of £431 million in cash to shareholders has further raised those expectations in some quarters.

But it should not be forgotten there is no other bidder for Argos. GUS could tell Argos's investors that they can simply take its cash or leave it.

The argument would be that Argos is still the flagging company it was when Rose was brought in, and that while he has made many promises, there is no guarantee he can deliver. Moreover, handing back £431 million to investors could turn out to be an own goal, as it will leave the company in a financially weakened position.

On the other hand, the investors who have stuck with Argos through its recent difficulties are likely to have some faith in the company and might therefore need some convincing in order to accept GUS's bid.

To satisfy them, GUS could offer an equity alternative rather than more cash. This might convince a few doubters, but unfortunately it would make the bid much more complex, not least because GUS would have to start answering questions about synergies.

The Argos defence has probably been sufficiently convincing to ensure that a little bit more cash will be proferred, but anyone expecting the 700p a share that Argos has been bandying about is destined to be disappointed.

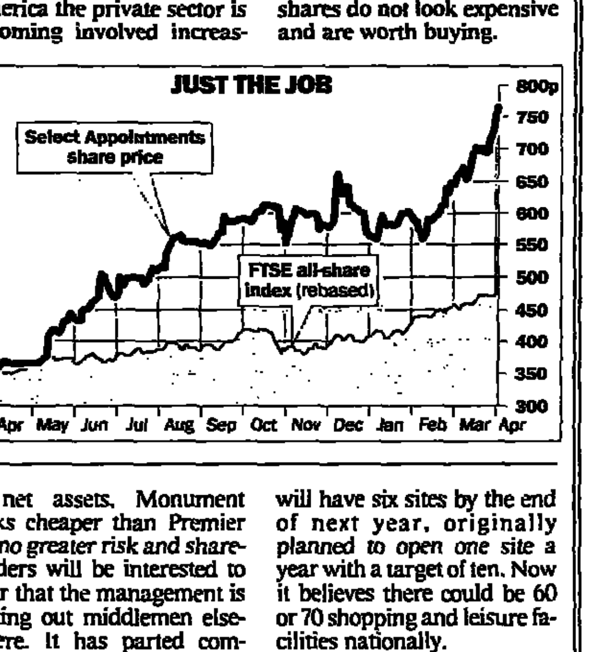
Select Apps

THE relentless rise of Select Appointments shares has been partly driven by a steady stream of acquisitions over the past year. The latest deal lifted the shares 13½p to 775p. One year ago the they traded at 355½p; in 1994 they were worth 54¾p.

Tony Martin, chairman, and Zach Miles, finance director, rescued Select from self-inflicted problems in the early 1990s. They have created a global recruitment business with a market capitalisation of almost £800 million. Not quite Manpower, but the company dwarfs its quoted peers in London and poses decent competition to European recruitment companies like Adecco.

Yesterday's deal sees two New Zealand IT companies bolted on to Select's growing presence in Australasia at a cost of £5.7 million. In February Select acquired two IT recruitment businesses in the Netherlands. The IT market is global and Select benefits from a shortage of skilled personnel.

The broader picture is also favourable for organisations like Select. In Europe and America the private sector is becoming involved increasingly in government-sponsored projects such as Labour's New Deal to retrain the workforce and reduce social security costs so even in countries where unemployment is high, there is no shortage of work to generate fees. Even at 20 times this year's earnings the shares do not look expensive and are worth buying.



Monument Oil

MONUMENT OIL & GAS is once again looking interesting. The City had been waiting, and rather impatiently, for a successor to Monument's elephantine Liverpool Bay field. The oil company brandished an investment in Turkmenistan, an old Soviet field, and the City sniffed.

Turkmen oil has problems — namely export routes and price. Until recently, Monument was being gouged by middlemen — some $7 per barrel — for the privilege of tankering its crude to a Russian Black Sea port. But a deal with Iran cuts the cost dramatically, allowing Monument to deliver oil to the northern Iranian border and swap it for Iranian oil in the gulf. Meanwhile, the company is close to a deal in Azerbaijan, is studying prospects in Iran and awaits news of a potentially big find in Colombia.

Priced at a small premium to net assets, Monument looks cheaper than Premier for no greater risk and shareholders will be interested to hear that the management is cutting out middlemen elsewhere. It has parted company with NatWest just as the oil company launches a big rights issue. Unkind gossips say the broker was unwilling to forgo its underwriting fee.

Freeport Leisure

SHARES in Freeport Leisure, placed at 65p in mid-1994, traded at 380p yesterday. They have trebled in value in the past year alone. Yet the City retains an appetite for the stock, which fell just 3p on news of a £63.3 million rights issue.

Freeport is cashing in on the 1990s fashion for all-day shopping expeditions, providing family oriented leisure facilities alongside retail outlets. Wherever it opens, demand seems to outsrip supply. The group, which will have six sites by the end of next year, originally planned to open one site a year with a target of ten. Now it believes there could be 60 or 70 shopping and leisure facilities nationally.

The shares have traded at a premium to Freeport's net asset value. Net asset value forecasts for the year to June 30 of 237p and of 275p by June 1999 do not take into account yesterday's fundraising and the revaluation of new sites. Analysts estimate this could lift net asset value to 500p, which justifies the current premium rating.

What the company has in its favour is the rarity of its retail concept within the market. Investors looking for exposure to this niche in the retail sector will discover there are few alternatives to Freeport. But while Freeport does enjoy a strong lead over its competitors, much depends on the success of its next two or three sites. At these levels the shares should be treated with caution.

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

May	1070-1069	Jul	1175 BID
Jul	1086-1085	Sep	1199-1192
Sep	1104-1102	Dec	unq
Dec	1126-1123	—	—
Mar	1149-1145		
May	1165-1160		Volume: 4198

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

May	1820-1815	Jan	1695 SLR
Jul	1763-1780	Mar	1665 SLR
Sep	unq	May	unq
Nov	1725-1710		Volume: 7235

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Dec	278.5-77.7
Spot: 270.6		Mar	283.5-81.7
May	267.5-67.1	May	287.5-84.1
Aug	270.4-69.6	Aug	293.0-87.1
Oct	275.5-74.7		Volume: 1963

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on April 2

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB:	68.46	95.26	87.20
(+/-)	-6.39	+2.22	-0.73
Eng/Wales:	68.46	97.01	86.09
(+/-)	-6.39	+2.31	-0.62
(%)	+14.0	+19.0	-4.0
Scotland:	unq	89.55	91.05
(+/-)	—	+0.94	-1.67
(%)	—	-2.0	+16.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	13.80	+0.45
Brent 15 day (May)	14.55	+0.45
Brent 15 day (Jun)	14.85	+0.45
W Texas Intermediate (May)	16.00	+0.50
W Texas Intermediate (Jun)	16.30	+0.50

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	154 (-1)	158 (+1)
Gasoil EEC	134 (+3)	137 (+4)
3.5 Fuel Oil	69 (n/c)	73 (+1)
Naphtha	135 (-1)	140 (+1)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Apr	133.50-33.75	Jul	140.75-41.25
May	136.00-36.25	Aug	143.75-44.00
Jun	138.25-38.50		Vol: 18558

BRENT (6.00pm)

May	14.57-14.58	Aug	15.42-15.47
Jun	14.89-14.90	Sep	15.66 SLR
Jul	15.16-15.20		Vol: 31583

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
May	74.50	May	73.00
Jul	76.60	Sep	73.25
Sep	76.50	Nov	75.25
Nov	78.50	Jan	77.25
Jan	80.50	Mar	79.25
Volume: 678		Volume: 22	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Apr	45.0	40.0
May	60.0	60.0
Jun	unq	69.0
		Volume: 96

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

May 48.25-48.75

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Apr 98	1025	995	1025
May 98	1038	1015	1035
Jun 98	—	—	995
Jul 98	950	934	935

Vol: 96 lots Open interest: 1444 Index 955 -1

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	1696.0-1697.0	1720.0-1721.0	Vol: 1895050
Lead ($/tonne)	589.00-590.00	585.00-585.50	196225
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1104.0-1105.0	1125.5-1126.0	522950
Tin ($/tonne)	5760.0-5770.0	5640.0-5645.0	31815
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1378.0-1379.0	1405.0-1406.0	2865075
Nickel ($/tonne)	5320.0-5330.0	5415.0-5420.0	79506

LIFFE OPTIONS

	Series	Calls Apr	Jul	Oct	Puts Apr	Jul	Oct
ASDA	200	8	18½	26	3½	11	14½
(*204)	220	1	10	17	16½	22½	25½
Abbey Nat	1200	40	110	144½	27	73½	101½
(*1212)	1250	19	85	119½	56	98½	126
Alld&Leic	900	33½	74	98½	17	45½	62½
(*926½)	950	7½	49½	74½	46	72	87½
Alld Dom	600	16	40½	61	12	38½	45
(*602½)	650	2½	21	40½	48	70½	74½
SAA	600	25	49	63½	6	28	32½
(*620)	650	4	25½	39½	34	54½	59
BAT Ind	500	39½	67	77	3½	20½	30
(*536½)	550	9	40	51½	22	43	54
Barclays	1700	94	183½	227½	14½	72½	110½
(*1776½)	1800	33½	131	177½	53½	119½	158½
Bass	1150	34	81½	108½	21½	64½	77
(*1158½)	1200	13½	58	83½	51	91	102½
Boots	950	45	79	107½	7½	35½	51
(*984)	1000	17	53	81½	29	60	75
Br Airways	600	42½	65½	83	2	25½	33
(*640½)	650	9½	38½	57½	18½	49	57
BP	850	42	77	100½	9½	36	47½
(*878½)	900	16	52	75	29	58½	71½
Br Steel	140	7	13½	17	2	10½	13½
(*145½)	160	—	5½	9	15	23	26
C&W	700	51½	87½	108	4½	31	43½
(*748)	750	18	59	85	20½	53	66½
CU	1200	46½	116½	146½	21	69½	86½
(*1222)	1250	22	91½	122	47	94	110
GlaxoW	1700	73½	169½	217	26½	88½	129
(*1752)	1800	24½	121	169	75	137	178½
HSBC	1800	62½	172½	222	36	114	154
(*1822)	1900	20½	124½	173	98	166	204½
Halifax	900	26½	71	95	15½	47	60
(*910)	950	7½	47½	70½	45	73½	85½
ICI	1100	32	87½	113½	15½	52½	76
(*1115)	1150	11	62	88	44	77½	100½
Land Sec	1050	42½	83	106½	8½	50½	59½
(*1080)	1100	15½	57½	80	31½	76	84
M&S	550	43	58½	75	1½	17	24½
(*591)	600	8½	30½	49½	17½	38	46
Natl Pwr	550	31½	54	71	10	35	41½
(*571½)	600	8	31	50	34½	64½	69½
Nat West	1100	33	99	129	19½	63½	88
(*1115)	1150	11½	74	104	47½	88½	112½
Reuters	645	16½	50½	72½	14½	38	55½
(*646)	703	1½	26	49	58	73	89
Ryl&Sun	750	36	78½	98	12	39½	60½
(*771)	800	12½	51	73½	38½	65	85
Safeway	360	25½	37	50	3½	19½	26½
(*382½)	390	7½	23½	38½	13½	34	40
Sainsbury	500	28	43½	58	3½	19	24½
(*524½)	550	4½	20½	34	29½	46	51
Shell	420	31½	43½	55	1	14½	21½
(*450)	460	6	23	34½	15	33	40½
Smith Bch	750	45½	88½	118½	9½	44½	64
(*786½)	800	19½	64½	96	31	69	89
Std Chrtd	850	32	95½	130½	20	72½	96½
(*869½)	900	12½	72	107	49	98½	122½
Thames W	950	43	75	94½	7½	37½	48
(*985)	1000	14½	48	68½	29½	63	72½
Vodafone	650	24½	62½	84	15½	44½	55
(*658½)	700	7	41½	60½	47	72½	82
Woolwich	354	18	36	46	4	17½	24
(*387)	384	4	21½	33	20½	33½	39
Zeneca	2600	80	210	281	38	128½	162
(*2642½)	2700	33½	159	230	88½	178	210
	Series	Jul	Oct	—	Jul	Oct	—
Reed Intl	600	57	73½	—	24½	36	—
(*622)	650	34	50	—	50½	61	—
	Series	May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
BTR	200	16	26	32	9½	13½	18½
(*207½)	220	7	17½	23	20½	24	29½
Blue Circ	360	24½	41½	45½	20	30½	34
(*371)	390	12½	28½	33	38½	48	51
Br Aero	1900	135	211	265½	45	92	129
(*1973½)	2000	80	160½	215	88½	140½	173
Br Telcm	650	43	65½	79½	16½	35½	43
(*670)	700	19½	41	55½	42	60	68½
Cadbury	850	52	80	97	22½	39	49½
(*873½)	900	26½	54½	71	47½	63½	73
Carlton Cms	420	47	60	69½	4½	14½	20½
(*459)	460	21	37	47½	18½	31½	38
Energy Gp	800	47½	49	54	½	3	6
(*844)	850	7	10	16½	13½	19½	20
Gallaher	300	32	45½	51	5½	12½	19½
(*325)	330	15½	28½	35	17½	26	33½
GEC	460	22½	35	45½	18	30½	36
(*461)	500	7½	19½	29½	44	54½	59½
	Series	May	—	—	May	—	—
Diageo PLC	613	146	—	—	½	—	—
(*753½)	671	91½	—	—	5	—	—
	Series	May	Aug	Nov	May	Aug	Nov
Diageo PLC	729	50	79	—	21	37	—
(*753½)	787	22½	50	—	52	68	—
Hanson	330	33½	43½	51½	5½	11	16½
(*355)	360	16½	26	35	18	23½	29½
Imp Tob	390	35½	44½	53½	5½	13	18
(*417½)	420	17	28	37	17	26½	31½
Kingfshr	1050	56	87½	114	38	56½	68½
(*1071½)	1100	34	62½	88½	65	82½	93½
Lasmo	260	15½	27	33	11	18	20½
(*265)	280	7½	18½	23½	22	29	30½
Ladbroke	330	21½	35½	44½	14½	22	27
(*336)	360	10	22	31	32	38½	43
LucasVar	240	23½	33	40	6½	13	14½
(*257½)	260	12	22½	30	14½	22½	24
P&O	900	38½	67½	81	29½	47	58
(*902)	950	18½	44½	58	59½	75	88½
Prudentl	850	72½	107	127	23	45	60½
(*882½)	900	45	81½	102	45	68½	84½
Rio Tinto	800	41	74	94½	31	53	69
(*800)	850	20½	52	72	61½	81½	97
Redland	330	15½	18½	—	½	1	—
(*345)	360	½	0½	—	15½	15½	—
R-Royce	260	22	32½	40	11	18½	22½
(*273½)	280	11½	23	30½	20½	28½	32½
Tesco	550	42½	61½	74	9	20	24
(*586½)	600	16	34½	47½	32½	41½	47
Utd Bisc	240	13½	23½	26½	7	12	16
(*243½)	260	5½	13½	17½	20	23½	27
	Series	Jun	Sep	Dec	Jun	Sep	Dec
BG PLC	306	21½	—	—	15½	—	—
(*311)	330	11½	21	27½	29	34½	39½
BSkyB	420	43	56½	70	20	29	36
(*440½)	460	23½	37½	51	40	49	56
Br Bio	60	15½	21	24½	7½	9½	12
(*68)	70	11	17½	21	13	15½	18
Centrica	110	10½	15	18½	5½	8	9
(*113)	120	6½	11	14	10	13½	14
Dixons	500	52	66½	81½	16	27	31
(*531½)	550	24½	41½	57½	38	52	56½
EMI	460	62½	72½	86½	15	30½	37½
(*496½)	500	41	52	67	31½	50	57
Granada	1050	73	103½	128½	31½	50	62½
(*1080½)	1100	46	77½	102½	65½	73½	86
GUS	750	50½	74	86	32½	45	59
(*757½)	800	28½	50½	63	61	72	85½
Lloyds TSB	950	89	121	147	42½	65½	80
(*984)	1000	63	96½	122½	67½	90	104½
Lonrho	100	8½	13	—	6½	10½	—
(*102½)	110	4	9	—	12	15½	—
Norwich	460	28	44½	55½	29	38	45
(*460)	500	14	30	40	55½	63	69
Orange	390	50½	65½	77½	15½	24	33½
(*415½)	420	34	51	63	28	38	48½
Railtrack	1000	95½	123	145½	37	59½	74½
(*1042)	1050	70	98½	121	60	83½	98
Scot Pwr	550	38½	53½	65½	36½	45½	51
(*552)	600	19	34	45½	69	76½	81½
Tarmac	110	10½	14½	16	4	6	8½
(*118)	120	5½	9½	11	9	11	13½
Tomkins	330	35½	42½	47	8	14½	16½
(*354½)	360	17½	25½	31	19	27½	30½
Unilever	550	89½	103½	113½	3½	8½	17
(*633)	600	53	68½	80½	14½	22	33

April 3 Total: 27556 Calls: 9451 Puts: 18105

FTSE INDEX (*6087)

Strike	Calls Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Dec	Puts Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Dec
5900	204	293½	361	421	652	38	109	156	191½	303½
5950	166½	255½	331½	391	—	49	121½	173½	211	—
6000	131½	226	303	367	592½	66	140	193½	230½	345½
6050	101	196	273½	330	—	86½	161½	215	250	—
6100	74½	168	242	299½	532	108½	181½	236½	270½	385½
6150	52½	142½	215½	269	—	142½	208½	261	294½	—
6200	37½	120	194	246	471½	178	239	290½	323	432

April 3 Total: 3091 Calls: 1223 Puts: 1868

*Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Jun 98	109-06	109-14	108-31	109-08	112707
Previous open interest 0	Sep 98				109.25	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Jun 98	107.72	108.10	107.68	107.97	104333
Previous open interest 182368	Sep 98	107.45	107.45	107.45	107.63	4
Five Year Gilt	Jun 98	102.92	102.98	102.88	102.97	990
Previous open interest 11306	Sep 98				104.32	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Jun 98	119.62	119.95	119.55	119.82	44701
Previous open interest 133769	Sep 98	120.06	120.06	120.06	120.18	3
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Jun 98	129.21	129.50	129.17	129.41	2534
	Sep 98	129.33	129.33	129.33	129.29	100
Three Mth Sterling	Jun 98	92.50	92.51	92.48	92.48	15280
	Sep 98	92.62	92.64	92.61	92.62	13276
Previous open interest 857564	Dec 98	92.78	92.81	92.77	92.78	22261
Three Mth Euromark	Jun 98	96.280	96.290	96.275	96.285	46435
Previous open interest 2151362	Sep 98	96.150	96.180	96.140	96.165	53380
Three Mth Eurolira	Jun 98	95.32	95.33	95.27	95.28	38913
Previous open interest 935973	Sep 98	95.79	95.80	95.76	95.78	21272
Three Mth Euroswiss	Jun 98	98.43	98.44	98.36	98.42	11991
Previous open interest 130389	Sep 98	98.27	98.28	98.20	98.27	6941
Three Mth ECU	Jun 98	95.81	95.81	95.79	95.80	922
Previous open interest 45522	Sep 98	95.84	95.87	95.84	95.85	3928
FTSE 100	Jun 98	6149.0	6173.0	6077.0	6115.0	26038
Previous open interest 158745	Sep 98	6190.0	6190.0	6190.0	6195.0	150

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 7¼ Finance Hse 8

Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 7⅛ Low 6 Week fixed: 7⅛

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 7 ; 3 mth 7 . Sell: 2 mth 6¾ ; 3 mth: 6¾ .

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	7⅛-7¼	7⅛-7¼	7⅛-7⅛	7⅛-7⅛	
Sterling Money Rates:	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼
Interbank:	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼

Overnight: open 7⅛, close 6½.

Local Authority Deps:	7⅛	n/a	7⅛	7⅛	7⅛
Sterling CDs:	7⅜-7¼	7½-7⅜	7½-7⅜	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼
Dollar CDs:	5.56	n/a	5.56	5.58	5.64
Building Society CDs:	7½-7⅜	7⅜-7¼	7⅜-7¼	7½-7⅜	7⅜-7¼

TREASURY BILLS: Applics: £610m allotted: £100m: Bids: £98.23% received: 45%: Last week: £98.225% received: 42%; Avge rate: £7.0874% last wk £7.0934%; Next week: £100m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5⅝-5½	5¼-4¾
Deutschemark:	3½-3⅜	3½-3⅜	3½-3⅜	3⅝-3½	4-3
French Franc:	3½-3⅜	3½-3⅜	3½-3⅜	3⅝-3½	3½-2½
Swiss Franc:	1½-1¼	1½-1¼	1½-1¼	1½-1¼	1½-½
Yen:	½-⅜	½-⅜	½-⅜	½-⅜	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $303.20-303.60 Close: $306.10-306.60 High: $306.70-307.20 Low: $302.25-302.75 AM: $305.95 PM: $306.00

Krugerrand: $311.00-313.00 (£188.00-190.00)

Platinum: $412.00 (£247.75) Silver: $6.655 (£4.05) Palladium: $280.00 (£168.35)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for April 3	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.4534-3.4801	3.4534-3.4561	1½-1pr	3½-3¼pr
Brussels	63.210-63.750	63.210-63.311	23-18pr	63-56pr
Copenhagen	11.688-11.773	11.688-11.698	⅜-⅛pr	1-½pr
Dublin	1.2170-1.2289	1.2170-1.2194	15-8pr	53-43pr
Frankfurt	3.0651-3.0887	3.0651-3.0676	¾-½pr	2½-2¼pr
Lisbon	313.89-316.42	313.89-314.23	¾-½pr	2½-2¼pr
Madrid	260.25-262.24	260.25-260.53	65-55pr	203-184pr
Milan	3022.7-3026.5	3022.7-3026.5	53-36pr	174-151pr
Montreal	2.3552-2.3705	2.3552-2.3573	0.56-0.50pr	1.11-1.03pr
New York	1.6595-1.6670	1.6595-1.6604	0.263-0.242pr	0.763-0.732pr
Oslo	12.672-12.777	12.672-12.687	⅜-¼pr	1¼-1pr
Paris	10.271-10.351	10.271-10.280	¼-⅛pr	1-½pr
Stockholm	13.255-13.367	13.255-13.271	¼-⅛pr	1-½pr
Tokyo	223.51-225.25	223.51-223.80	1½-1¼pr	4-3¾pr
Vienna	21.563-21.730	21.563-21.582	⅜-¼pr	2½-1¼pr
Zurich	2.5321-2.5537	2.5321-2.5351	1½-1¼pr	3½-3¼pr

Source: Extel Premium - pr. Discount - ds.

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5220-1.5243
Austria	13.01-13.02
Belgium (Com)	38.17-38.18
Canada	1.4180-1.4185
Denmark	7.0550-7.0570
France	6.2017-6.2027
Germany	1.8504-1.8509
Hong Kong	7.7485-7.7495
Ireland	1.3567-1.3617
Italy	1824.6-1826.1
Japan	135.42-135.52
Malaysia	3.7750-3.7779
Netherlands	2.0848-2.0853
Norway	7.6496-7.6546
Portugal	189.51-189.61
Singapore	1.6315-1.6345
Spain	156.98-157.07
Sweden	7.9906-8.0006
Switzerland	1.5310-1.5320

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6656-1.6683
Australia dollar	2.5311-2.5365
Bahrain dinar	0.621-0.635
Brazil real*	1.8907-1.8936
China yuan	13.658-13.958
Cyprus pound	0.8905-0.9095
Finland markka	9.2975-9.4385
Greece drachma	528.75-539.25
Hong Kong dollar	12.8951-12.9061
India rupee	65.21-66.51
Indonesia rupiah	unq
Kuwait dinar KD	0.505-0.516
Malaysia ringgit	6.2835-6.2921
New Zealand dollar	3.0220-3.0276
Pakistan rupee	72.55 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	6.000-6.135
Singapore dollar	2.7123-2.7214
S Africa rand (com)	8.320-8.489
U A E dirham	6.0525-6.1885

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	1,885	LASMO	5,194
ASDA Gp	7,810	Legal & Gn	3,268
Abbey Ntl	7,425	Lloyds TSB	14,508
Allied Dom	3,261	LucasVarity	7,102
Allnce & Leic	3,418	Marks Spr	12,621
Amvescap	541	Nat Grid	5,139
AB Foods	2,042	Nat Power	6,119
Bk of Scot	6,863	NatWst Bk	11,843
BAA	6,191	Next	2,184
Barclays	4,218	Norwich Un	4,866
Bass	1,591	Nycomed Amr	253
BAT Inds	19,064	Orange	44,755
BG	16,871	P & O	3,783
Billiton	2,541	Pearson	4,099
Blue Circle	1,373	PowerGen	1,800
BOC	2,989	Prudential	3,893
Boots	2,422	Railtrack	2,078
BAe	1,577	Rank Group	1,965
BA	7,874	Reckitt Col	1,221
Brit Energy	9,529	Reed Intl	4,055
Br Land	1,492	Rentokil	12,212
BP	14,984	Reuters	15,804
Brit Steel	6,233	Rio Tinto	4,737
BSkyB	2,644	Rolls Royce	4,637
BT	17,659	Royal & Sun	3,650
BTR	14,234	Royal Bk Scl	1,783
Cable Wire	5,061	Safeway	3,736
Cadbury	4,923	Sainsbury	4,003
Carlton Cms	6,843	Schroders	174
Centrica	25,167	Scot & New	1,518
Cm Union	2,480	Scot Power	3,090
Compass Gp	2,680	Svrn Trent	1,004
Diageo	8,840	Shell Trans	29,112
EMI	1,746	Siebe	2,036
Energy Gp	1,069	Smiths Ind	959
Enterpr Oil	1,785	SmKl Bch	12,334
Gen Acc	877	Std Chartd	6,714
Gen Elec	8,306	Sun Life	1,251
GKN	536	Tesco	5,290
Glaxo Well	10,762	Thames W	1,281
Granada	2,588	Tomkins	5,012
GUS	2,615	Unilever	11,120
GRE	3,791	Utd News	1,367
Hays	834	Utd Utilities	1,858
ICI	1,392	Vodafone	18,400
Kingfisher	9,243	Whitbread	606
HSBC	5,494	Williams	9,246
Halifax	10,772	Wolseley	1,630
Ladbroke	2,929	Woolwich	7,977
Land Secs	1,514	Zeneca	2,010

WALL STREET

	Apr 3 midday	Apr 2 close
AMP Inc	43½	43½
AMR Corp	141¼	142¼
AT & T	66⅛	66½
Abbott Labs	77⅜	77½
Advanced Micro	28⅞	29⅛
Aetna Life	88	86½
Ahmanson (HF)	80⅛	79⅛
Air Prod & Chem	82⅛	82¼
AirTouch Comm	49	48⅝
Albertson's	54½	53⅞
Alcan Aluminum	30¼	30⅛
Allied Signal	45¼	44¼
Alum Co of Am	69¼	69⅛
Amerada Hess	58¼	58⅛
AEP	50¼	50⅛
Amer Express	97⅛	94¼
Amer Genl Corp	64⅛	64
Amer Home Pr	97¼	96⅛
Amer Intl	127¼	127¼
Amer Stores	24½	24½
Amer Standard	46¼	46¼
Ameritech	49¼	48⅛
Amgen	58¼	59½
Amoco	86	86½
Andrew Corp	20⅛	20⅛
Anheuser-Busch	45½	48⅛
Apple Computer	26⅛	26⅛
Archer Daniels	22¼	22⅛
Armco	6	6⅛
Armstrong Wrld	86½	86½
Asarco	27	26½
Atl Richfield	78¼	77¼
Atmel Corp	16½	17
Auto Data Pro	67½	67⅛
Avery Dennison	54½	55
Avon Products	81⅛	81½
Baker Hughes	40¼	41½
Baltim Gas & El	32½	32⅛
Banc One	64½	64⅛
BankAmerica	86⅛	85⅛
Bank of NY	64⅛	63⅛
Bankers Tr NY	122¼	122⅛
Bausch & Lomb	48¼	48½
Baxter Intl	55½	54½
Becton Dickinsn	70⅛	70½
Bell Atlantic	103⅛	101¼
BellSouth	68¼	68½
Best Foods	116⅛	117¼
Black & Decker	54½	53
Block (H&R)	47½	48½
Boeing	54½	55
Boise Cascade	36⅛	36⅛
Boston Scien	69½	67½
Bristol Myrs Sq	106⅛	106½
Browning Ferris	33⅛	33⅛
Brunswick	34½	34½
Burlington Nthn	105⅛	106⅛
CMS Energy Corp	46½	46⅛
CSX	60⅛	60
CBS Corp	35¼	35½
Campbell Soup	55⅛	56
Carolina Pwr	45¼	45½
Case Corp	68½	67½
Caterpillar	54	53⅛
Central & SW	27½	27⅛
Champion Intl	53⅛	54½
Chase Manhat	139⅛	139⅛
Chevron Corp	81⅛	83⅛
Chrysler	41½	41½
Chubb Corp	79	79⅛
Cigna Corp	205⅛	208½
Citicorp	143⅛	142⅛
Clorox	88½	88⅛
Coastal Corp	66¼	66½
Coca Cola	80⅛	81⅛
Coca Cola Ent	36½	35⅛
Colgate-Palm	86⅛	87½
Columbia Energy	81⅛	81½
ColumbiaHCA	32¼	32⅛
Compaq Comp	25½	25⅛
Comp Ass Int	55½	55⅛
ConAgra	31⅛	32½
Cons Edison	46½	46½
Cons Nat Gas	58½	58⅛
Cooper Inds	62⅛	60⅛
Corestates	90⅛	90½
Corning Inc	40⅛	42½
C'wide Credit	53½	53⅛
Crestar Finl	60⅛	60⅛
Crown Cork	53½	53½
Dana Corp	60	59⅛
Dayton Hudson	88½	88¼
Deere	60⅛	61⅛
Delta Air Lines	117⅛	117⅛
Deluxe Corp	32½	32½
Digital Equip	52⅛	52⅛
Dillard Dept St	36½	36½
Disney (Walt)	109⅛	108⅛
Dominion Res	41⅛	41½
Donnelley (RR)	42¼	42½
Dover Corp	37⅛	38¼
Dow Chemical	94½	95⅛
Dow Jones	54½	54⅛
Dresser	49⅛	49⅛
Duke Energy	60⅛	60⅛
Dun & Bradstreet	35½	35⅛
Du Pont	70⅛	69
Eastman Chem	69½	68½
Eastman Kodak	64⅛	66¼
Eaton Corp	94½	95
Edison Intl	29⅛	29⅛
Elect Data Sys	45½	46¼
Emerson Elec	64½	65⅛
Engelhard Corp	19¼	19½
Enron Corp	46¼	46⅛
Entergy	29½	29½
Ethyl Corp	8⅛	8⅛
Exxon	69½	69½
FDX Holding	72⅛	72⅛
FMC Corp	81⅛	82
FPL Group	63½	64
Fifth Third Banc	87⅛	87
Fleet Finl Grp	85⅛	85⅛
Fluor Corp	48¼	49
Ford Motor	65⅛	63½
Fort James	49¼	48⅛
Fortune Brands	41½	41½
Franklin Res	55	54
GTE Corp	62⅛	60⅛
Gannett	73⅛	73½
Gap Inc Del	45⅛	45½
Gateway 2000	45⅛	46½
Gen Dynamics	44¼	89⅛
Gen Electric	89	87⅛
Gen Mills	75	75½
Gen Motors	68	67⅛
Gen Reinsurance	223⅛	225
Gen Signal	46⅛	46⅛
Genuine Parts	37⅛	37½
Georgia Pac	66⅛	66½
Gillette	124½	124⅛
Glaxo Wellc ADR	58	57⅛
Goodrich (BF)	52¼	52⅛
Goodyear Tire	75⅛	74½
Great Lakes	54½	54½
Halliburton	52	51⅛
Harcourt General	55¼	55¼
Heinz (HJ)	58½	58⅛
Hercules	49¼	49¼
Hershey Foods	75½	74½
Hewlett Packard	62¼	62¼
Hilton Hotels	31⅛	30⅛
Home Depot	70¼	68½
Homestake Mng	11⅛	10⅛
Honeywell	85½	85½
Household Intl	142⅛	142
Houston Inds	29½	29⅛
Humana	25⅛	25¼
Ikon Office	35⅛	36⅛
Illinois Tool	64¼	65½
Illinova	30¼	30¼
INCO	18⅛	18¼
Ingersoll Rand	50⅛	50⅛
Inland Steel	27⅛	27⅛
Intel Corp	76⅛	76½
IBM	105½	105⅛
Intl Flav & Fr	46⅛	47¼
Intl Paper	49½	49⅛
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	76	76⅛
Kellogg	47⅛	43½
Kerr-McGee	70½	70⅛
Kimberly-Clark	50¼	50⅛
Kmart	18⅛	17⅛
Knight-Ridder	56⅛	55⅛
Lilly (Eli)	59¼	59¼
Limited Inc	30¼	29⅛
Lincoln Nat	86¼	86½
Litton	60⅛	59⅛
Liz Claiborne	49½	49
Lockheed Martin	113¼	114½
Louisiana Pac	22⅛	22⅛
MCI Comm	50⅛	50½
Manpower Inc	40⅛	40½
Marriott Int	36¼	36½
Marsh & McLnn	89⅛	88⅛
Masco Corp	60⅛	60½
May Dept St	63⅛	63⅛
Maytag Corp	51½	50⅛
McDonalds	62⅛	63
McGraw Hill	74⅛	75¼
Mead Corp	36	36⅛
Meditrust Corp	31½	31⅛
Medtronic	54⅛	53½
Mellon Bk	64⅛	63⅛
Merck Inc	131½	132⅛
Mercury Fin	0⅛	0⅛
Merrill Lynch	85½	83⅛
Microsoft	92⅛	91⅛
Minnesota Mine	91¼	92½
Mirage Resorts	24⅛	24⅛
Mobil Corp	79	79½
Monsanto	55⅛	54⅛
Morgan (JP)	133⅛	134
Motorola Inc	60⅛	60½
Mylan Labs	22½	22⅛
Natl Semi	20⅛	20⅛
Natl Service Ind	59½	60
Navistar Int	34½	35⅛
NY Times A	71⅛	71
Newmont Mng	31⅛	30½
Nike B	45⅛	44⅛
NL Industries	17⅛	17⅛
Nordstrom	65¼	66⅛
Norfolk Sthrn	38⅛	37½
Nthn State Pwr	60	59¼
Norwest Corp	42⅛	41⅛
Occidental Pet	29	29
Office Depot	30½	30¼
Oracle	28¼	30¼
Oryx Energy Co	25¼	26
Owens Corning	35⅛	35½
PPG Industries	68⅛	69⅛
PMI Group	79⅛	79
PNC Bank	60⅛	60⅛
PP&L Res	23⅛	23½
Paccar Inc	60¼	60⅛
Pacificorp	24½	24⅛
Pac Enterprises	41⅛	41⅛
PaineWebber	41½	40⅛
Pall Corp	21¼	21⅛
Parker Hannifin	51⅛	52
Peco Energy	22¼	22⅛
Penney (JC)	77⅛	77¼
Pennzoil	64¼	64¼
Pepsico	44	44⅛
Pfizer	100	97⅛
Pharm & Upjhn	44⅛	44⅛
Phelps Dodge	64⅛	64¼
Philip Morris	39⅛	39⅛
Phillips Pet	50⅛	51¼
Pitney Bowes	51½	51½
Polaroid	44⅛	45¼
Procter & Gmbl	87¼	89⅛
Providian	63½	64½
Pub Serv E & G	37⅛	37⅛
Quaker Oats	57½	58
Ralston Purina	103⅛	103
Raytheon Corp	40⅛	41
Raytheon B	57½	57¼
Reebok Intl	30¼	30¼
ReliaStar Fin	47⅛	47⅛
Reynolds Metals	61⅛	61¼
Rockwell Intl	57⅛	57⅛
Rohm & Haas	104½	105⅛
Royal Dutch	58½	59
Rubbermaid	29⅛	28⅛
SBC Comms	43¼	44
Safeco Corp	54¼	54⅛
St Paul's Cos	88¼	88⅛
Sara Lee Corp	62⅛	63½
Schering Plough	84½	84⅛
Schlumberger	77⅛	77½
Seagram	38⅛	38⅛
Sears Roebuck	58¼	58¼
Shell Trans	45⅛	45⅛
Sherwin Wllms	36½	37¼
Silicon Graphics	13⅛	14
Snap-On-Tools	45⅛	45⅛
Southern Co	27¼	27⅛
Southtrust	41⅛	41⅛
Sprint Corp	68⅛	67⅛
Stanley Works	55¼	55½
Starwood H & R	53⅛	54
Sun Company	41½	41⅛
Sun Microsys	41⅛	42⅛
Suntrust	75⅛	75¼
Supervalu	47⅛	47⅛
Synovus Fin	37¼	37¼
Sysco Corp	26¼	26⅛
TRW Inc	55½	55¼
TIG Hldgs	26⅛	25⅛
Tandy Corp	47	46⅛
Temple Inland	61½	61½
Tenet Healthcare	38⅛	38¼
Tenneco	42⅛	43
Texaco	62⅛	61¼
Texas Inst	56¼	56½
Texas Utilities	40¼	40½
Textron	76⅛	77½
Thermo Elect	41¼	42⅛
Time Warner	75¼	74⅛
Times-Mirror A	63¼	63½
Timken	35⅛	35⅛
Torchmark	47⅛	46⅛
Toys R Us	29¼	29⅛
Transamerica	118⅛	118½
Travelers	62	61⅛
Tribune	71¼	71½
UST Inc	30½	31
US Bancorp	125⅛	125⅛
UAL	93⅛	93½
Unitrin	69¼	69
US Inds	29⅛	29½
US West Comm	57⅛	56⅛
US West Media	34⅛	34⅛
USAirways Group	71⅛	72¼
USX Marathon	38⅛	38¼
Unicom	34⅛	34¼
Unilever NV	74¼	74⅛
Union Camp	59¼	60⅛
Union Carbide	50½	51
Union Pacific	58	57⅛
Unisys Corp	18½	19¼
USF&G Corp	24⅛	24¼
United Tech	94½	95⅛
Unocal Corp	40⅛	39¼
VF Corp	52⅛	52⅛
Wal-Mart Stores	51¼	50¼
Warner-Lambert	183½	178⅛
Waste Mngmt	32¼	32⅛
Wells Fargo	331¼	329¼
Weyerhaeuser	56⅛	56¼
Whirlpool	66¼	67⅛
Whitman	19⅛	20¼
Winn Dixie	45½	47
Witco Corp	39¼	39¼
Woolworth	24¼	24⅛
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	84⅛	84½
Xerox	104¼	106⅛
Xilinx Inc	36⅛	39¼

SIMON WALKER



Cherie Blair with the wives of European and Asian leaders on the *Silver Sturgeon*, a Thames launch, yesterday while their husbands debated the Asian financial crisis at a summit meeting in London. Page 16

NEWS

State paternity leave
Working fathers are set to get one week's paid paternity leave, funded by the state ..... Page 1

Countryside alarm
The Countryside Alliance was in turmoil after culling the landowner grandees ..... Page 1

RAC windfall
The RAC chairman suggested to members that they float off the rescue businesses for £20,000 each ..... Page 1

Council clean-up
Corrupt councillors and town hall officials are to be rooted out by watchdogs ..... Page 1

Peace optimism
Tony Blair showed optimism over the prospects of a peace deal by disclosing that he intends to attend a concert in Belfast five days after a referendum. Page 2

Undercover cash
British women spend twice as much on underwear as they did ten years ago ..... Page 3

Body theft
A sculptor made legal history by becoming the first person in Britain to be convicted of stealing body parts ..... Page 5

Tagged killer
Sidney Cooke, a convicted child killer, has agreed to wear an electronic tag after his release from jail ..... Page 6

Housing challenge
A High Court ruling quashing plans for houses in the green belt, was hailed as an important countryside victory ..... Page 7

Royal artist
A watercolour by Queen Victoria is back where it was executed in Coburg in an exhibition. Page 9

Impotence pill
A pill to treat impotence could be available in Britain by September ..... Page 10

Teacher's return
A teacher criticised after she allowed a five-year-old boy to smack classmates is returning to make a stand against political correctness ..... Page 12

New candidate
Sonny Bono's widow, Mary, is standing for Congress as a Republican ..... Page 14

Ancient road
A lone Englishwoman has found a road network that linked the cities of ancient Lycia ..... Page 18

New Deal crisis
High levels of crime and drug abuse among the young jobless threaten the success of Gordon Brown's New Deal ..... Page 20

NEWS FEATURES

Valerie Grove: With Sir Derek Hornby, the lad known as "Dublo" at school, who talks of the worst day of his career ..... Page 21

Temple treasures: The Government of Guatemala plans to "evacuate" hundreds of ancient stelae and replace them with modern replicas Page 11

Berlin memory: Battle-scarred Dakotas are being painted and polished for the 50th anniversary of the Berlin airlift ..... Page 17

Shopping fever: The Great Easter Shopaway begins next weekend as 1.7 million people leave Britain ..... Page 19

OBITUARIES

Lydia Delectorskaya, muse to Henri Matisse; **Right Rev John Allin,** American Episcopal Church; **Jimmy Scoular,** footballer ..... Page 25

OPINION

Working it out: If the Government is to make the most of its jobs initiative, it must embrace the flexibility that it has urged on others ..... Page 23

A theft of history: Guatemala is being systematically plundered of its history by marauding gangs ..... Page 23

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: Was it conceivable that every computer could really "think it was 1900"? Could these titans of the post-Industrial revolution truly reinstate the year of my dreams ..... Page 22

Andrew Miller: To pursue relentlessly the sub-plots of a loved one's life is to poke about in a Bluebeard's cellar. Likewise, the compulsive need to confess, to constantly disinter our ghastly secrets, is a violence akin to flicking rubber-bands ..... Page 22

BUSINESS

Rolls-Royce: Volkswagen is testing a new 12-cylinder engine that could be built in Britain and used in the car-maker's new range ..... Page 27

Store war: Argos, the catalogue retailer fighting off a hostile £1.6 billion bid from Great Universal Stores, vowed to return £431 million to shareholders ..... Page 27

RoadChef: Nomura has overtaken Nikko, its Japanese rival, in the race to buy the motorway service group ..... Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 11.4 to 6064.2. Sterling fell from 108.5 to 107.9 after falling from $1.6692 to $1.6603 and falling from DM3.0859 to DM3.0679 ..... Page 31

WEEKEND MONEY

Cleaner motoring; trust funds; Japanese economy; first-time buyers Pages 48-64

SPORT

Rugby union: England have a theoretical chance of winning the Five Nations if they overcome Ireland ..... Page 34, 35

Football: An FA Cup semi-final offers Wolves an opportunity to exorcise the ghosts of the club's glorious past ..... Page 37

Rugby league: Wigan against Castleford is the most significant match in the opening weekend of the Super League Page 46

Davis Cup: Greg Rusedski gave Great Britain a winning start ..... Page 44

LETTERS

Silence of Labour backbenchers; discord at Westminster Abbey; Royal Navy away from home too long; Clinton in Africa; roadside daffodils Page 23

SECTIONS

the times

Baring all: Three actresses as painted ladies.. Page 16
Spy in the cold: David Shayler on exile ... Page 26
Kicking: No-holds barred fighting ..... Page 36
Life in fear: Woman editor in the Arab world Page 82
Cheating: A womaniser meets his nemisis Page 86

metro

Interview: The truth about Massive Attack ..... Page 6
Books: Erica Wagner on a Civil War epic; Nick Hornby; David Leavitt; top bestsellers Pages 14-21
Tango: Dancing back to Britain ..... Page 22
Listings: Everything for your area ..... Pages 26-43

WEEKEND

Malaria: The side-effects of drugs ..... Pages 1, 2
Model mother: Catwalk queen and orphans Page 3
Home life: Mentors for wayward children. Page 8
For sale: Where Vivien Leigh found love.. Page 10
Faith: Sportsmen who are have found God... Page 18
Travel: Paris; trans-Africa; Labrador ..... Pages 25-35

Vision

Full seven-day guide to television and radio

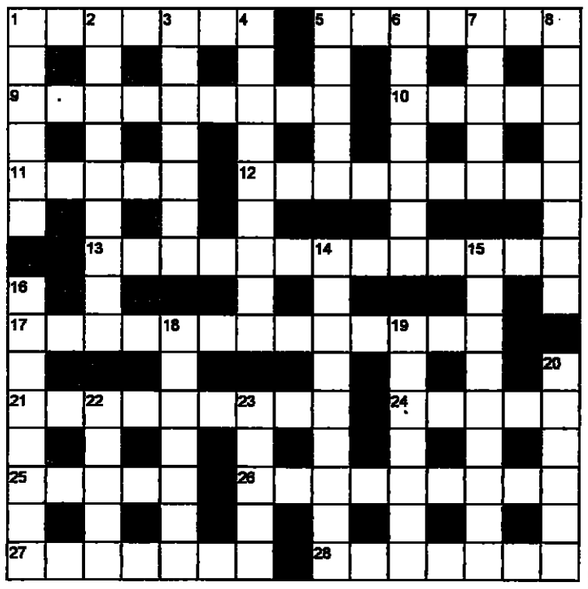
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The freakiest creatures on earth; secrets of the soaps

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,757

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address .....



ACROSS

1 Jump on horse and get going (5,2).
5 Amounts expressed numerically as squares, say (7).
9 Senior officer likely to appear heartless in most cases (9).
10 Bend in river in neat part of London (5).
11 American imprisoned by Lincoln for insulting language (5).
12 Not even one of the Baker Street boys, for example (9).
13 Oppose the production of chickens — a very shady activity (5-8).
17 Looking at other people's hands, one knows what's on the cards (7-6).
21 Obscene publication's original plan (9).
24 Drastically affect with revolting object (5).
25 Contemplating year one had in England (5).
26 Tom Jones, for one, came across the heath (9).
27 One working to make dough sounds like poor person (7).
28 Without a clue, don't enter so much data (7).

DOWN

1 Striking gesture (6).
2 One who may appear in a flash (9).
3 Fuss about river exercise creating danger to shipping (7).
4 Sounds like affectionate donkey's given bedding (9).
5 Entrance hall designed to meet needs of the old within (5).
6 So-called farmer briefly in charge of agricultural work (7).
7 Take to the streets and dance around Bull's Head (5).
8 Wise man keeping jug for removal of water (8).
14 Game player in a loose scrum is dumbfounded (9).
15 Realise it is wrong for this old citizen (9).
16 It's delivered by hand to striker not working with the rest (3-5).
18 Such work lacks order and is not called for (7).
19 Article put on line, wet, here? (7).
20 A Degas reproduction more than one saw (6).
22 Marry single sweetheart (5).
23 Gather inside train ferry (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20751

K	E	E	P	U	N	D	E	R	■	L	I	N	K	S
A	■	M	■	L	■	I	■	O	■	O	■	I	■	U
R	O	B	O	T	I	C	■	B	A	T	H	T	U	B
M	■	R	■	I	■	K	■	I	■	U	■	R	■	S
A	B	Y	S	M	■	W	I	N	D	S	W	E	P	T
■	■	O	■	A	■	H	■	G	■	■	■	■	■	A
M	O	N	E	T	■	I	S	O	L	A	T	I	O	N
E	■	I	■	U	■	T	■	O	■	N	■	N	■	C
D	E	C	I	M	A	T	E	D	■	A	N	G	L	E
I	■	■	■	I	■	F	■	L	■	L	■	■	■	■
C	H	A	L	L	E	N	G	E	■	G	U	E	S	T
A	■	B	■	U	■	G	■	L	■	E	■	N	■	H
T	R	U	M	P	E	T	■	L	I	S	S	O	M	E
E	■	Z	■	I	■	O	■	I	■	O	■	F	■	■
D	O	Z	E	N	■	N	E	W	M	A	R	K	E	T

Solution to Puzzle No 20756

H	E	A	T	H	R	O	W	■	S	T	R	E	A	M
I	■	L	■	E	■	L	■	A	■	O	■	L	■	A
D	O	L	L	A	R	D	I	P	L	O	M	A	C	Y
I	■	O	■	D	■	E	■	P	■	M	■	N	■	O
N	A	T	T	I	E	R	■	A	S	U	N	D	E	R
G	■	M	■	N	■	■	R	■	C	■	■	■	E	■
■	B	E	L	G	R	A	D	E	■	H	U	M	U	S
H	■	N	■	■	L	■	N	■	■	I	■	S	■	■
A	S	T	I	R	■	F	E	T	C	H	I	N	G	■
N	■	O	■	R	■	■	U	■	N	■	■	S	■	■
D	E	V	O	T	E	E	■	C	O	N	G	E	A	L
I	■	I	■	U	■	S	A	G	■	H	■	I	■	■
C	U	T	A	N	D	C	O	M	E	A	G	A	I	N
A	■	A	■	D	■	O	■	E	■	R	■	H	■	K
P	I	L	L	A	R	■	P	O	L	Y	G	A	M	Y

Last week's winners: B C Cubbon, Tonbridge, Kent; M Mackinnon, Barton-under-Needwood, Staffs; Dr I A McCoubrey, Letcombe Regis, Oxon; I Cunningham, Aberdeen; B K Lane, Cuckfield, W Sussex.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises:	Sun sets:
6.30 am	7.39 pm
Moon sets	Moon rises
3.00 am	12.08 am

Full moon April 11

London 7.39 pm to 6.28 am
Bristol 7.48 pm to 6.37 am
Edinburgh 7.57 pm to 6.34 am
Manchester 7.49 pm to 6.33 am
Penzance 7.59 pm to 6.51 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises:	Sun sets:
6.28 am	7.40 pm
Moon sets	Moon rises
3.43 am	1.08 pm

Full moon April 11

London 7.40 pm to 6.25 am
Bristol 7.50 pm to 6.35 am
Edinburgh 7.59 pm to 6.31 am
Manchester 7.51 pm to 6.31 am
Penzance 8.00 pm to 6.49 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	6.59	3.5	7.50	3.5
Avonmouth	-	-	12.30	10.3
Belfast	4.38	3.1	5.32	3.0
Cardiff	-	-	12.16	9.6
Devonport	11.19	4.4	11.42	4.4
Dover	4.12	5.8	4.48	5.6
Dublin	5.18	3.6	6.03	3.5
Falmouth	10.50	4.2	11.13	4.2
Greenock	5.17	3.2	5.06	2.8
Harwich	4.58	3.6	5.24	3.3
Holyhead	3.43	4.7	4.33	4.5
Hull (Albert D)	11.42	7.4	-	-
Ilfracombe	11.29	7.2	-	-
King's Lynn	11.45	5.2	-	-
Leith	8.14	4.6	8.57	4.6
Liverpool	4.23	7.9	5.06	7.6
London Bridge	7.00	6.5	7.27	6.2
Lowestoft	3.03	2.2	3.15	2.1
Margate	5.27	5.3	5.34	4.1
Milford Haven	11.47	5.4	-	-
Newquay	10.47	5.5	11.22	5.4
Oban	-	-	12.22	2.8
Penzance	10.10	4.4	10.48	4.4
Portland	11.57	1.3	-	-
Portsmouth	4.42	4.0	5.39	3.9
Shoreham	4.21	5.3	5.03	5.1
Southampton	3.57	3.8	4.39	3.7
Swansea	11.58	7.5	-	-
Tees	9.19	4.7	10.03	4.6
Walton-On-Naze	4.56	3.8	5.26	3.5

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Guernsey, 15C (59F); lowest day max: Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, 2C (36F); highest rainfall: Strathallan, Perth and Kinross 1.22in; highest sunshine: Clacton, Essex, 8.7hr.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1997

FORECAST

☐ **General:** Scotland will continue to see gales in the north and many parts of the UK will have a blustery day. It will be generally cloudy in Scotland with any sunshine more likely in the west. All parts will be showery. The showers will be prolonged and heavy, especially in northern and eastern Scotland, but all parts are at risk of a heavy shower. There is also the risk of thunder and hail in places, especially in Northern Ireland, Wales and western England. Tonight: showers will retreat to exposed coasts and hills, but it will remain breezy everywhere. The best clear spells will be across central and eastern districts.

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E and W Midlands:** sunny breaks and showers, some heavy. Moderate to fresh southwesterly wind. Max 15C (59F).

☐ **E England, Central N England, NE England:** sunny spells and scattered showers. Fresh southwesterly wind. Max 15C (59F).

☐ **Channel Isles, SW England, S and N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** showers, some sharp and possibly thundery. Fresh to strong southwesterly wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland:** cloudy with showery rain. Fresh to strong easterly wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow:** some sunny breaks but also showers. Fresh easterly wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** cloudy with showery outbreaks of rain, falling as snow in the northern Highlands. A strong to gale-force easterly wind. Max 7C (45F).

☐ **N Ireland:** mostly cloudy with showers, heavy and prolonged at times. Moderate to fresh easterly wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **Irish Republic:** bright or sunny intervals with showers, heavy and prolonged at times with thunder and hail. Fresh or strong west or southwest wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **Outlook:** unsettled but showers becoming less frequent with a better chance of longer sunny spells. The far north of Scotland will stay more generally cloudy with periods of rain.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

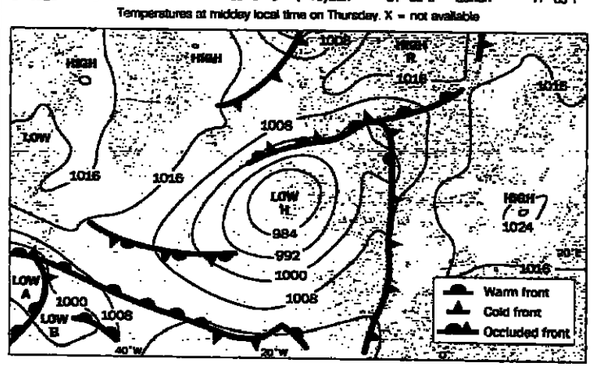
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	-	0.62	3	37	r
Anglesey	3.8	0.51	11	52	sh
Aspatria	2.6	0.45	11	52	sh
Aviemore	0.4	0.16	3	37	sn
Belfast	1.6	0.68	11	52	sh
Birmingham	4.6	0.46	12	54	sh
Bognor R	7.3	0.56	13	55	f
Bournem'th	7.3	0.26	13	55	sh
Bristol	3.5	0.49	13	55	sh
Buxton	3.8	0.61	10	50	b
Cardiff	X	0.03	13	55	sh
Clacton	8.7	0.45	12	54	sh
Cleethorpes	6.6	0.43	13	55	sh
Colwyn Bay	X				
Cromer	5.0	0.31	13	55	sh
Dunbar	X				
Eastbourne	5.9	0.57	13	55	s
Edinburgh	0.2	0.54	8	46	r
Eskdalemuir	1.4	0.71	11	52	sh
Exmouth	3.7	0.59	11	52	h
Falmouth	X				
Fishguard	0.5	0.48	10	50	sh
Folkestone	4.1	0.22	12	54	b
Glasgow	0.2	0.22	7	45	r
Guernsey	7.2	0.17	15	59	s
Hastings	4.8	0.42	12	54	sh
Hayling I.	7.9	0.33	12	54	h
Herne Bay	X				
Hove	7.6	0.31	12	54	f
Hunstanton	8.1	0.27	13	55	sh
Isle of Man	0.9	0.80	11	52	sh
Isle of Wight	7.6	0.39	12	54	h
Jersey	5.9	0.35	14	57	sh
Kinloss	0.1	0.17	4	39	r
Leeds	3.7	0.71	13	55	h
Lerwick	3.6	0.04	5	41	h
Leuchars	-	1.10	5	41	r
Littlehmptn	7.4	0.48	13	55	f
London	6.3	0.11	14	57	sh
Lowestoft	6.9	0.37	13	55	f
Manchester	1.5	0.46	12	54	h
Margate	6.1	0.37	14	57	sh
Minehead	X				
Morecambe	2.9	0.22	13	55	r
Newcastle	6.3	0.76	13	55	sh
Newquay	X				
Norwich	5.5	0.31	14	57	f
Oxford	4.0	0.12	12	54	sh
Penzance	X	0.50	12	54	gS
Poole	4.7	0.28	14	57	s
Prestatyn	X				
Ross on Wye	X	0.44	13	55	sh
Selcombe	3.2	0.38	12	54	h
Seaton Snd	2.4	0.28	12	54	s
Scarboro'	X				
Shrewsbury	1.8	0.39	11	52	f
Skegness	6.3	0.24	13	55	sh
Southend	7.3	0.45	15	59	f
Southport	X	0.31	12	54	r
Southsea	8.3	-	13	55	r
Stornoway	0.1	0.01	6	43	r
Swanage	7.0	0.27	12	54	sh
Teignmouth	4.5	0.48	12	54	sh
Tenby	1.1	0.23	11	52	sh
Tiree	1.5	0.03	9	48	sh
Torquay	4.4	0.41	13	55	s
Tynemouth	-	-	12	54	c
Weston s Mare	1.5	0.33	13	55	c
Weymouth	4.7	0.37	12	54	h

ABROAD

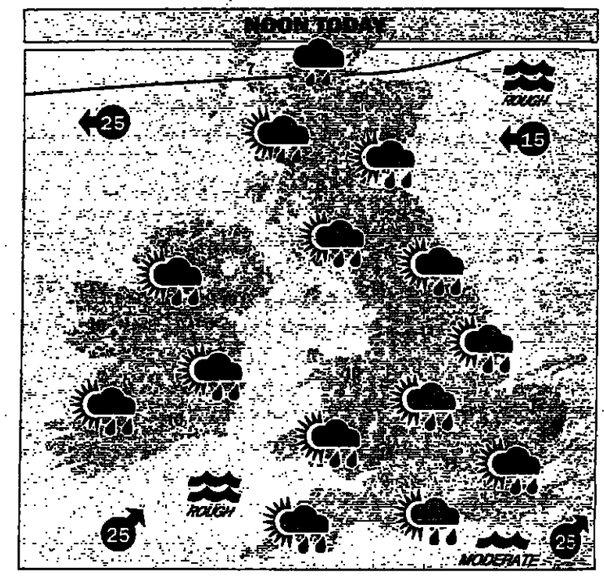
Ajaccio	17	63	f	Cologne	15	59	f	Madrid	15	59	c
Alicante	18	64	f	Corfu	15	59	f	Majorca	20	68	s
Alex'dria	20	68	f	C'phagn	1	34	sn	Malaga	24	75	s
Algiers	22	72	s	Dublin	11	52	s	Malta	18	66	f
Amst'dm	10	50	r	Dubrovnik	14	57	f	Melb'rne	16	61	f
Athens	17	63	s	Faro	19	66	s	Mexico C	29	84	s
B Aires	14	57	s	Florence	14	57	f	Miami	28	82	s
Bahrain	26	79	s	Frankfurt	15	59	f	Milan	18	64	c
Bangkok	X			Funchal	20	68	s	Montreal	3	37	fg
Barbados	29	84	f	Geneva	15	59	c	Moscow	-4	25	c
Barcelona	19	66	f	Gibraltar	21	70	s	Munich	15	59	s
Beijing	X			Helsinki	-5	23	sn	N Delhi	31	88	s
Beirut	18	64	f	Hong K	24	75	f	N York	16	61	f
Belgrade	21	70	s	Innsbruck	12	54	c	Nairobi	27	81	f
Berlin	7	45	c	Istanbul	15	59	s	Naples	15	59	f
Bermuda	22	72	f	Jeddah	30	86	s	Nice	16	61	s
Biarritz	19	66	f	Jo'burg	26	79	f	Oslo	3	37	f
Borde'x	15	59	r	L Angels	14	57	f	Paris	12	54	c
Brussels	15	59	f	L Palmas	20	68	c	Perth	32	90	s
Budapst	21	70	f	Le Tquet	13	55	f	Prague	14	57	c
Cairo	31	88	s	Lisbon	17	63	c	Reykjavik	6	43	s
Cape Tn	24	75	s	Locarno	15	59	f	Rhodes	15	59	f
Ch'church	15	59	X	Luxembg	14	57	c	Rio de J	25	77	f
Chicago	9	48	c	Luxor	33	91	s	Riyadh	31	88	s
Rome	14	57	r
S Fr'sco	13	55	f
S Paulo	X		
Salzburg	13	55	f
Santiago	30	86	s
Seoul	11	52	f
Sing'por	X		
St'kholm	10	32	c
Strasb'rg	17	63	c
Sydney	22	72	f
Tangier	19	66	f
Tel Aviv	26	77	c
Tenerife	22	72	f
Tokyo	X		
Toronto	10	50	c
Tunis	21	70	f
Valencia	21	70	f
Vanc'ver	10	50	f
Venice	15	59	s
Vienna	17	63	f
Warsaw	6	43	r
Wash'ton	22	72	s
Wel'ngton	16	61	X
Zurich	17	63	f

Temperatures at midday local time on Thursday. X = not available



Changes to chart above from noon: low H almost stationary as it fills slowly; high R declining and becoming indistinct; lows A and B combining as they sweep east towards south Britain

NOON TODAY





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UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT



LAWRENCE DALLAGLIO
Five Nations and beyond
PAGE 35

DANNY BAKER
Trouble and the name game
PAGE 45

COMPANY OF WOLVES
Keith Curle leads the FA Cup hunt
PAGE 37



WEEKEND MONEY

TAX EFFICIENT CARS
PAGE 48



HOW MUCH ARE TOY SOLDIERS WORTH?
PAGE 62

THE TIMES SATURDAY SPORT

APRIL 4 1998

CLASS WILL TELL IN AINTREE'S ANNUAL TEST OF NERVES



GILL ALLEN

Rough Quest in playful mood with his lad, Michael Clarke, on the eve of his attempt to win a second Grand National

Rough Quest has quality control

BY RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

AS AN antidote to the normal hyperbole that surrounds big sporting events, there is one crucial factor that should be put on record concerning the Martell Grand National this afternoon: it is the poorest-quality field for years.

This is underlined by the fact that only seven of the 37 probable runners will be carrying their correct weight. Because there is a minimum of ten stone for the race, the rest are all carrying more weight than that allotted to them by the handicapper on the basis of what they have achieved, in some cases as much as 32lb.

However, for many once-a-year backers, the size of the field will make up for the lack of class. As Rob Hartnett, of the Tote, emphasised yesterday: "The massive gamble that is the Grand National has far more to do with quantity than quality. It is far more important to get 37 runners of lesser ability than the 20 best horses in training."

Modifications made to the once forbidding National fences have helped to reduce the element of uncertainty in the race and contributed to the better horses winning in recent years. In theory, at least, the large number of "no-hopers" which will set off in search of glory shortly after 3.45pm does make the task of finding the winner a shade easier.

Suny Bay, so impressive when winning the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Newbury in November, heads the weights and attempts to become the first horse since Red Rum to carry 12 stone to victory. After suffering a mid-season slump in form that coincided with the rest of Charlie Brooks's string being out of sorts, he ran well to finish fifth in the Cheltenham Gold Cup.

The striking grey, runner-up behind Lord Gyllene 12 months ago, will relish the testing conditions underfoot but, with doubts remaining over whether he is back to his very best, his price looks plenty short enough.

Rough Quest, winner of this race two years ago, has endured a frustrating season. Placed behind See More Business in the King George VI Chase at Kempton and a good race at Cheltenham, he then fell six fences out in the Cheltenham Gold Cup when travelling comfortably behind the leaders.

He has always been at his best in the spring and Terry Casey, his trainer, could not have been more bullish yesterday. "He's in good form and I am very happy with him," Casey said. "He was squealing this morning and he is absolutely jumping out of his skin. He could not be in better shape but, of course, he is two years older."

Nonetheless, 12 year-olds have a good record in the Grand National. Rough Quest has a high cruising speed that enables him to conserve energy and, although the National "factor" has been all but eliminated, being a course and distance winner is hardly a disadvantage.



One Man dies 1, 40
Richard Dunwoody 40
Big race guide 41
Simon Barnes 43

Form students will be quick to point out that Challenger Du Luc has the clear beating of Rough Quest, judged on their run at Kempton on Boxing Day. However, all the brilliance of Martin Pipe, the champion trainer, and Tony McCoy, the champion jockey, will be required to persuade this talented rascal to give of his best. Even then, he is far from certain to last out the trip.

Earth Summit, the Welsh National winner, has ground conditions in his favour and hails from a yard in top form. He likes left-handed tracks, but does not look quite good enough. Nahthen Lad, representing Jenny Pitman, has always appealed as a National horse and his trainer is confident, but he has been disappointing, by and large, for the past two years.

A bigger danger to Rough Quest may be Him Of Praise, an out-and-out stayer who relishes soft ground and has progressed throughout the season. He is not the easiest of rides but is the type of horse to be galvanised into action by the challenge of Aintree.

Those who prefer an each-way interest at long odds should consider three outsiders. Killeshin was seventh in last year's race on unsuitably fast ground and will relish the demanding conditions today.

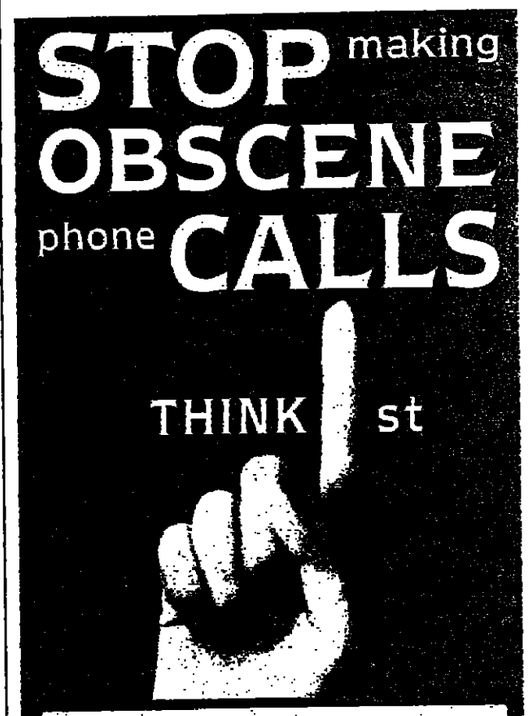
Celtic Abbey has disappointed in two runs this term but has a winning chance judged on last year's form, provided he handles the soft ground. St Mellion Fairway, entered for the Cheltenham Gold Cup as a novice, has had his sights lowered in recent seasons but will enjoy ideal ground conditions for the first time in ages.

THE EXPERTS VIEW

RICHARD EVANS	THUNDERER
1 ROUGH QUEST	1 NAHTHEN LAD
2 Him Of Praise	2 Suny Bay
3 St Mellion Fairway	3 Rough Quest
4 Celtic Abbey	4 Him Of Praise



CHRIS MCGRATH	TIMEKEEPER
1 DUN BELLE	1 SUNY BAY
2 Ciel De Brion	2 Nahthen Lad
3 Do Rightly	3 Rough Quest
4 Celtic Abbey	4 Earth Summit



Destination	BT	FT	Savings
AUSTRALIA	49p	20p	59%
FRANCE	28p	15p	47%
JAPAN	67p	25p	66%
REP. IRELAND	23p	12p	48%
USA	24p	10p	58%

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Dalglish struck dumb by reverse Midas touch

LYNNE TRUSS

Kenny Dalglish picked up a mug of steaming coffee and took a tentative sip. Oh, right. Yes. Here we go again. In the time it had taken to raise the cup to his lips, it had gone stone cold. He sighed and put it down. This sort of thing had been happening ever since he arrived at St James' Park. It was like that old Hollies song, *King Midas in Reverse*. Look at the Newcastle United team, for example. One minute they were Kevin Keegan's exotic Magpies, challenging for top of the League, and the next . . .?

Best to say nothing, however. A lifelong habit of taciturnity was a blessing. If you can't think of anything nice to say, say nothing at all. He reached into a pocket for his gold pen, which promptly turned to dull metal in his hand. He scratched an eyebrow and it fell off. "Talk about it," his therapist, Dr Finkelstein, had begged him. "This Midas syndrome is surely all in the mind." But the talking cure was not for Kenny. In his vicinity donkeys had always been rightly optimistic about retaining all their limbs. "Speech is silver, but silence is golden," his mother used to instruct him. "Shallow brooks murmur most."

Newcastle had been a strange development in Dalglish's glittering career. At first his mission there had seemed so straightforward: to banish joy. He was the Thomas Cromwell of football. St James' Park had become a place of gaiety and had to be sorted out. Cavalier types such as Ferdinand, Ginola and Asprilla must go; roundheaded old-timers and nobodies must replace them. But then things started to go wrong; to get out of hand: he started to experience retribution for meddling with God's own team. "Let's have a look at that ankle," he'd said to Alan Shearer one day at the start of the season. And two hours later — well, the rest is history.

Dalglish left his office and shut the door. The handle came off in his hand, metamorphosed into an adder, dropped to the ground and slithered off down the corridor. He looked at his hand with a mixture of misery and resignation. Was it time to talk to somebody about this? No, no, of course not. Newcastle could yet win the FA Cup, after all. Admittedly, they might be relegated at the same time, but a cup's a cup, for all that. The regular embarrassment of sending away the Duraglit salesman would finally be over.

"Denial certainly has its psychological uses," Dr Finkelstein had assured him in their one, disastrous, session. "But *it can be taken too far*." They had then sat in silence for quarter of an hour.

"A shut mouth catches no flies," Dalglish had said, finally.

"Well," Dr Finkelstein harrumphed. "What am I going to do with a couch that's got two broken legs and all the springs hanging out? It was perfectly good before you came along."

How those words echoed in his head. *It was perfectly good before you came along*. Whoever would have thought this would happen to him? He pushed his office door lightly, to check it was shut, and, with a sickening, splintering noise, it crashed inwards on the carpet, taking frame and plaster with it. He looked at the clouds of dust rising, but said nothing. "Keep your breath to cool your porridge," he thought. "A still tongue makes a wise head." And with those oh-so-familiar platitudes to comfort him, he set off down the corridor to face the day.

Young guns must attack freely at Twickenham and wait for France to slip in Five Nations finale

England seeking pointer to future

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ANY race that arrives at the final lap with three contenders for honours should have a general appeal. However, the 1998 Five Nations Championship has not strewn its favours around so generously: the most likely conclusion to this weekend is the first back-to-back grand slam for France but, should they fail against Wales at Wembley tomorrow, then England could slip through on the rails.

Even were Wales to deny the French victory, their own points deficit is such that they have no realistic chance of emerging as champions. But, at Twickenham today, England — whatever their openly expressed views about long-term development and World Cup ambitions — must give themselves the best opportunity they can of challenging for the title by beating Ireland in convincing fashion in the Lloyds/TSB international.



This may be only a staging post en route to the World Cup but no side suffers by picking up whatever trophies may lie along the way, or even by surpassing the deeds of their predecessors. This remains, after all, a very young England squad, players and management, but even if they do not win the championship they could yet establish — for example — a record for points scored in the four matches.

Some might claim that says more about the nature of the opposition than about England at this stage of their development, but there is no harm in gathering rosebuds. No country has scored more in the championship than the 141 points England achieved last season and, this morning, they stand on 111. In their past three outings against Ireland they have averaged 31 points, so the task is clearly not beyond them.

Yet you worry when you hear coaches, particularly from New Zealand, talking up the opposition as Warren Gatland has done this week. Gatland, the Ireland coach, suggested that if England could win 46-6 at Lansdowne Road last season, they could do the same again at home against his squad, which has yet to open its account in the championship.

A stream of errors has persisted in Ireland's game so that matches they could and should have won against Italy, Scotland and perhaps even France have been lost; they have no problems with the competence of their forwards, but the lack of cutting edge in midfield has cost them dear.

They look at Wales with a midfield pairing of Allan Bateman and Scott Gibbs; at France with Stéphane Glas and Christophe Lamaison; at England with Jeremy Guscott and Will Greenwood and then consider the attacking limitations of their own centres. For all their defensive qualities — and Ireland have conceded only 65 points in three games compared with 141 in four last season — any combination of Kevin Maggs, Mark McCall and Rob Henderson does not register on the same scale.

Asked if he feels aggrieved that Ireland's returns have not matched their efforts over the season and Keith Wood, the captain, is singularly honest. "We do feel we are better than the results we have had but, if we had played well enough, taken our chances, we would have won something," the Harlequins hooker said.

"We haven't done that, so I don't think you could call it a grievance." But the Irish are not noted as shy, retiring violets on the rugby field; they have only one opportunity to make something of their season now and victory over England would provide the whole game in Ireland with a huge boost.

"The game in Ireland" is the key phrase there: the Irish Rugby Football Union is making sustained efforts to limit the flow of players to England and to provide a credible domestic base to a game that still stands down the pecking order in terms of national popularity.

All of which leaves Lawrence Dallaglio and his England players cold. Their agenda has been publicly displayed all season: to conjure a side that will make an impact on the southern hemisphere but that has yet to overcome a serious hurdle. England have played the top four countries in the world this season (and will play three of them again in the summer), but have yet to win against any of them.

That is no surprise, given the culture and personnel changes that have taken place within the squad. But, if they cannot beat the top-ranked sides, clearly the next tier stands in the firing line: 60 points against Wales, 34 against Scotland, how many against Ireland, who have won only twice at Twickenham in the past 20 years, each time by a single point?

England have no secrets from the Irish, eight of whose team compete in the Allied Dunbar Premiership, but in a short period they have gathered together a unit strength that is already serving them well. They have yet to understand fully the fluid game they want to play, forwards standing in midfield do not always look as comfortable on the ball as they might, but at least England are trying to play it while preserving the set-piece qualities that have been a traditional virtue. It should be enough for them today.

GILL ALLEN



Catt's balance and versatility have secured him a berth on the right wing for England at Twickenham today

TODAY'S TEAMS AT TWICKENHAM

	ENGLAND		IRELAND
15	M B Perry (Bath)	15	C P Clarke (Terenure College)
14	M J Catt (Bath)	14	R M Wallace (Saracens)
13	W J H Greenwood (Leicester)	13	K M Maggs (Bristol)
12	J C Guscott (Bath)	12	M C McCall (London Irish)
11	A S Healey (Leicester)	11	D A Hickie (St Mary's College)
10	P J Grayson (Northampton)	10	E P Elwood (Galwegians)
9	M J S Dawson (Northampton)	9	C D McGuinness (St Mary's College)
1	J Leonard (Harlequins)	1	R Corrigan (Greystones)
2	R Cockerill (Leicester)	2	K B M Wood (Harlequins, captain)
3	D J Garforth (Leicester)	3	P S Wallace (Saracens)
4	M O Johnson (Leicester)	4	P S Johns (Saracens)
5	G S Archer (Newcastle)	5	M E G' Kelly (London Irish)
6	L B N Dallaglio (Wasps, captain)	6	D S Corkery (Bristol)
7	N A Beck (Leicester)	7	A J Ward (Ballymahinch)
8	A J Diprose (Saracens)	8	V C P Costello (St Mary's College)
	Referee: K D Bevan (Wales)		
	REPLACEMENTS: 16 P R de Glanville (Bath), 17 J Wilkinson (Newcastle), 18 S Benton (Gloucester), 19 D Ryan (Newcastle), 20 D J Grewcock (Saracens), 21 G C Rowntree (Leicester), 22 D E West (Leicester)		REPLACEMENTS (from): 16 K Keane (Garryowen), 17 D G Humphreys (London Irish), 18 B T O'Meara (Cork Constitution), 19 M J Galwey (Shannon), 20 N J Popplewell (Newcastle), 21 P M Clohessy (Young Munster), 22 A T H Clarke (Northampton), 23 E R P Miller (Leicester)
	TV: live on Sky Sports 2 from 1pm		

Woodward's gamble gives Catt chance to take flight

Mark Souster on the perennial England fall guy who keeps bouncing back into contention

This time last year Tony Blair was not the only person hoping to secure a successful five-year tenure at No 10. After a career spent being shunted between two positions in the England back division, Mike Catt was intent on securing the fly-half berth as his own. Fate, however, played a hand as concussion against South Africa last autumn, Paul Grayson's new lease of life in the international arena — which began in the very next game, against New Zealand — and an unhappy experience against France at full back in February conspired against him.

Catt, 26, is a prime example, perhaps *the* prime example, of a supremely talented individual who is perhaps too gifted for his own good, a category in which the mercurial Gregor Townsend, the Northampton and Scotland back, could also be included. On the one hand his footballing ability is indispensable, on the other it has been difficult to define his best position. Twelve times he has played at fly half for England, and 16 at full back. He would have been at centre, the position in which he made his reputation at Bath, against Australia but for the late withdrawal of Alex King, and today, after recovering from a second bout of concussion, he appears in his 29th international on the right wing. It will be the first time in his career that he has played there.

> 'I do need to prove something after the French game'

It is a gamble on the part of Clive Woodward, the England coach, but one that fits his masterplan of ensuring that he has at his disposal in the World Cup a set of players who are equally at home in a variety of positions behind the scrum.

For Woodward there are no square pegs in round holes; it is all about playing the same systems. That is his basic tenet and he makes no apologies for using the Five Nations Championship to experiment; after all, New Zealand are not scared to try things, so why not England? When Woodward joined Bath as coach last year, one of his first diktats was that it did not matter what number a player wore because he did not spend all his time on the field in that one position. If it all backfires, then Woodward can at least say that he tried.

Catt remains philosophical about his experiences, his confidence in his ability not dented by the occasions that he has been labelled England's fall guy. "I have the ability to read the game well enough so I can fit in. I do need to prove something after the French game: defensive needs are the only thing playing on my mind. But right wing is the easier side to defend. I have worked with Jerry [Guscott] before and we know each other pretty well," Catt said.

Andy Robinson, the Bath coach, is a paid-up supporter of the Catt fan club, and believes that the Port Elizabeth-born player's innate footballing skills will stand him in good stead. "He is an outstanding talent. Providing he keeps watching [Dennis] Hickie [his opponent today], he will be fine. He mustn't get caught ball watching. He will be on the outside looking in, so to speak, and, defensively, playing on the wing poses different demands."

That said, Robinson does not think that Woodward would have been so bold had England been facing the All Blacks, rather than Ireland. He also has a sneaking suspicion that Woodward approached Guscott with a view to playing on the wing but that those overtures would have been rebuffed.

"But I am fully supportive of what Clive is doing. Mike has the potential to be a world-class fly half or centre, a good international full back; as for wing we'll have to see," Robinson said. Once the first garryowen has rained down from the boot of Eric Elwood, perhaps we will.



England A turn season around

BY DAVID HANDS

ENGLAND'S junior sides turned the events of this season on their heads against Ireland at Richmond yesterday. Having lost all four of their previous A internationals, England found inspiration and scored six tries in their 40-30 victory, whereas England Under-21s, going for a grand slam, lost 9-7.

Over the past six months, England A teams appear to have lost heart in the light of the emphasis the senior-team management has given to promotion directly from the under-21 squad. However, yesterday they defended an unbeaten record on home soil against the Irish with considerable *élan*, notably through their Richmond players.

Craig Gillies, apart from scoring the fifth try, excelled at lock and Spencer Brown, who captained the team after the departure of Jenkins and Stimpson, suggested that he did not agree with Clive Woodward's assessment of the present crop of specialist wings.

Brown proved his defensive qualities against the New Zealanders before Christmas and here provided much of the attacking momentum. He also opened the scoring when successfully pursuing Lewsey's kick.

Sturnham, playing No 8, charged through for a second try before the Irish resurgence began with two delightful tries, the first created by Everitt and scored by Murphy, who set up the second for McWeeney. The power of the forwards enabled England to extend their advantage, the hard-working Fidler supporting a break by Mensah who then benefited from Dawson's wayward pass to sprint 50 metres to the line.

But England could never relax against spirited opponents. Woods's goal-kicking kept Ireland in touch and Everitt danced through for their third try. By then, though, Lewsey, in pursuit of his own chip, had given England enough breathing space.

England's hopes of a triumphant season at under-21 level withered in the face of a committed Irish forward effort, led by Leo Cullen from No 8 and David Wallace. Far too frequently, England lost possession in attacking positions, leaving a junior triple crown to Ireland.

England may also have regretted ignoring two early chances to kick at goal, preferring to establish attacking lineouts from which they failed to profit. Ireland preferred the chance of points and took them through Ronan O'Gara's three goals. England's only score came from a rolling maul when Pritchard stretched his way to the line, with Brown converting.

A INTERNATIONAL DETAILS

SCORERS: England A: Tries: Brown (9min), Sturnham (12), Fidler (45), Mensah (58), Gillies (64), Lewsey (67). Conversions: Stimpson 2. Penalty goals: Stimpson 2 (7, 36). Ireland A: Tries: Murphy (29), McWeeney (33), Everitt (76). Conversions: Woods 3. Penalty goals: Woods 3 (19, 49, 62).

SCORING SEQUENCE (England A first): 3-0, 8-0, 15-0, 15-3, 15-10, 15-17, 18-17 (half-time), 25-17, 25-20, 30-20, 30-23, 35-23, 40-23, 40-30

ENGLAND A: T Stimpson (Newcastle, rep: A King, Wasps, 75min), S Brown (Richmond), P Mensah (Harlequins), S Ravenscroft (Saracens), D Chapman (Richmond); J Lewsey (Bristol), P Richards (London Irish), D Barnes (Newcastle), P Greening (Gloucester; rep: G Chuter, Saracens, 77), J Mallett (Bath, rep: W Green, Wasps, 69), R Fidler (Gloucester), C Gillies (Richmond; rep: M Cornwell, Gloucester, 65), R Jenkins (Harlequins; rep: A Bennett, Saracens, 69), R Hutton (Richmond, rep: M Allen, Northampton, 78), B Sturnham (Saracens)

IRELAND A: S McDowell (Ballymena); J McWeeney (St Mary's College; rep: D Crotty, Garryowen, 65), P Duignan (Galwegians), M Murphy (Galwegians), D O'Mahony (Moseley); B Everitt (Garryowen), S McIvor (Garryowen); J Fitzpatrick (London Irish), S Jackman (Clontarf; rep: M McDermott, Shannon, 26), G Walsh (Garryowen), B Cusack (Bath), G Fulcher (London Irish; rep: S Leahy, Garryowen, 78), T Brennan (Beotive Rangers), K Dawson (London Irish; rep: A Foley, Shannon, 65), D O'Cuinneagain (Sale)

Referee: G Morandin (Italy).

Bath expect Jenkins to join them next season

BY MARK SOUSTER

BATH are confident that Neil Jenkins will join them next season from Pontypridd in a three-year deal worth an estimated £500,000. The Wales fly half has long been linked with a move to the Recreation Ground and Andy Robinson, the Bath coach, said yesterday that, after protracted negotiations, Jenkins would be playing with them next season.

"I am more than happy that Neil will be with us," Robinson said, adding that Jenkins would play at fly half, his favoured position. Jenkins, after playing at full back for the British Isles in South Africa last summer, recently told Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, that he did not wish to be considered as an international full back after an uncomfortable match in that position against England.

However, attempts to recruit Rob Howley, the Wales captain, have foundered. It appears that the cost of buying out his contract with Cardiff is prohibitive.

Jenkins, 26, will play his 57th international for Wales against France at Wembley tomorrow. He is already Wales's leading points-scorer and second to Gavin Hastings in the list of Five Nations scorers. Jenkins will still be able to live in Wales, significant in his decision to switch clubs. Like Ieuan Evans, he will commute to Bath.

Robinson wants to bolster his threequarters and Jenkins's arrival will enable Bath to use Mike Catt in other roles, as Clive Woodward continues to do with England.

RFU report finds fault with Brittle

BY DAVID HANDS

CLIFF BRITTLE came under fire from colleagues on the Rugby Football Union (RFU) council yesterday. A report by a small sub-committee suggested that Brittle's vision for the future, Rugby Restructure 2000, was "an expression of a totalitarian management style ... that has hitherto not been visible to the whole game".

Brittle, the chairman of the RFU management board, has spent the past three months taking his blueprint around the country in a consultative process. The sub-committee's report of his proposals will now be sent to all clubs for their consideration.

The report acknowledges the need for the RFU to increase its revenue streams and adopt a stricter business approach, but argues that the same template cannot be applied to the playing and management sides of the game. Many of Brittle's primary suggestions are described as unworkable.

The report criticises the proposed redefinition of the professional and amateur sides of the game and calls for a more co-operative attitude in working towards common objectives. "The open game should be encouraged to bed down, allowing clubs to find the level they are able to sustain," it says. "Potential England player development needs to have a high priority, with a negotiated but acceptable arrangement between club and country."

The report as a whole is likely to find favour with the leading clubs but will further polarise a situation where RFU council members must decide whether they support Brittle or not. Although he is not named in the report, Brittle is accused of ignoring RFU successes. "There appears to be no appreciation of the positive side of the economic equation such as the debenture renewals which, on conservative estimates, will raise £45 million within seven years," the report says. It points out that the domestic and international structured season is missing from Brittle's blueprint.

"Not only does the author dismiss the traditional history of the union and the role of the president by not including them, in addition the established democratic process of election and management of the game is turned on its head," the report says.

"The accountability-to-the-game clause can be interpreted as once a year at an annual meeting, with no other checks and balances on the activities of the board members nor provincial directors, save on that one occasion."

Competitive Ireland not there to make up numbers

LAWRENCE DALLAGLIO



Today's game against Ireland represents England's last opportunity to play together before our demanding visit to the southern hemisphere in June. It is important that we consolidate the improvements that we have been making throughout the season with a victory, but also in a style to sustain us against the world's leading lights.

That is not being disrespectful to Ireland, or any of our Five Nations Championship opponents, but, if we are going to be successful, we have to build more on to the domestic season so far. Many of our players have played international rugby in the championship and have thoroughly enjoyed it, but, if we do not set our sights higher, we will not move forward.

Our sights are set on the top and, if that means being ruthless along the way, so be it. We have been ruthless with ourselves in selection, in the hope of achieving long-term benefits to English rugby. That has not always been the English way in sport, but it's our way and no one should doubt that.

We know Ireland to be competent, immensely passionate, lacking nothing in terms of enthusiasm and commitment. They are also more skilful than many people give them credit for and I have seen parts of their game this season that have matched the best — remember their first 20 minutes against the All Blacks in Dublin last November.

Physically they will be up for the confrontation, but we will be ready for that, looking forward to both the one-on-one and unit battles. We know we won't have everything our way and that a stern defence will be required, but we will enjoy that and, when we do have the ball, we will try to impose our game plan.

Home advantage is beginning to mean something again: I hope we're making Twickenham into something of a fortress and we value the support we are getting. We seem to have changed the perception of many supporters, though I appreciate that there will be a great expectancy after what happened in our last home game.

But rugby is not an exact science. Anyone who thinks that, because we scored 60 points against Wales, who then went on to beat Ireland, there should be a huge scoreline today should think again. We have set no points objective, no particular target, but, if we focus on the style we seek and to raise our team performance another notch from the past three games, I hope the points will come.

Each game has thrown up new problems, and I like to think that we are solving them, as well as asking some questions ourselves. I'm very happy, as captain, with the changes made for today, even though some have found it strange to see Mike Catt on the wing.

I suggest that anyone who has seen how rugby has changed in the past three years will recognise that the criteria for wing play has altered immeasurably in that time. It helps to have pace — which Mike has; the emphasis, though, is not on pure speed but on footballing ability. Even in the southern hemisphere, a lot of ball is kicked through behind the defence and wings have to catch, retrieve, clear possession and know when to keep it infield.

I think Mike's abilities suit the wing very well. He will fit into the proactive game we seek: historically, games may have produced only one chance that had to be finished off, but we're looking at far more scoring opportunities now in a game that allows the strengths of every player to be expressed.

There has been criticism that England have chopped and changed this season, but that has been forced on the management by the schedule. I doubt if any previous England team has been faced with so demanding a domestic season and the injuries that has brought, but even so, it helps to find out now more about the players who will be needed in next year's World Cup. Fifteen players won't take us to a World Cup final; we will need 26 in whom there is the utmost confidence that they can perform to the level required.

On a personal note, I will go into the game today on the back of a good week. Wasps' hard work has paid off by reaching the Tetley's Bitter Cup final, and my main hope now is that, having secured a place at Twickenham, the desire to be part of a cup-final team will motivate players to perform well in our remaining Allied Dunbar Premiership matches.

The next day I went to Wembley with my father to watch Chelsea win the Coca-Cola Cup. That was a good afternoon and, though they slipped up against Vicenza on Thursday night, the Blues can look forward to the home second leg. For now, though, it's the men in green who will be posing problems.

France in mood to complete historic double

By Mark Souster

FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	3	3	0	0	93	49	6
England	3	2	0	1	111	70	4
Wales	3	2	0	1	75	94	4
Scotland	4	1	0	3	66	120	2
Ireland	3	0	0	3	53	65	0

RESULTS: France 24 England 17, Ireland 16 Scotland 17; England 60 Wales 26; Scotland 16 France 51; France 18 Ireland 16, Wales 19 Scotland 13; Ireland 21 Wales 30; Scotland 20 England 34.
TODAY: England v Ireland.
TOMORROW: Wales v France

IN 1968, revolution was in the air, rioting students filled the streets of Paris and, almost as an aside, France won their first grand slam by beating Wales in Cardiff. The whiff of unrest now permeates the game of rugby itself and, according to some, the barbarians are once more at the gates.

None of this will trouble the latest generation of French players who, tomorrow, should they once more beat Wales, this time at Wembley, will have achieved what no France side and only one other country — England — has done before: complete back-to-back grand slams.

Considering the quality of some of their predecessors, that would be a momentous feat. Whether this crop develops into a vintage team remains to be seen, but, with the World Cup around the corner, the omens are good, given that the average age is only 25. Although only Jean-Luc Sadourny of their number was even born 30 years ago, there is a thread that links past with present in Jo Maso.

As a player, Maso epitomised the spirit of the late 1960s: as the manager of the present France side, he has helped to bring order to their often chaotic game without betraying its intrinsic values.

"To achieve what nobody in France has done before would be fantastic and the realisation of the hard work of the coaches, Jean-Claude Skrela and Pierre Villepreux," Maso said. "France had two wonderful performances this season against England and Scotland. Our match against Ireland was a one-off but we still managed to win and that's what is important. We have a young team trying to find its style. The goal is to make history and we will be putting everything we've got into the match at Wembley. Everyone within the team is up for it."

He remembers that, 30 years ago, there was little pressure on France, and that heavy rain in the build-up to the game nullified the effectiveness of a Wales back division that stood on the cusp of greatness. The outcome was decided by the piano-shifters up front, which could well be the case tomorrow — a fact conceded by Rob Howley, the Wales captain, and the player whom Maso fears most.

"For our front row, Sunday will be the ultimate challenge," Howley said. "Our scrum was good against Scotland and Ireland but this French front row is two levels up from that. The challenge is to compete on our own terms.

"I don't want us to be in a position where we require a spectacular second-half fightback for victory. We fought back against the Scots and the Irish but, if we give France anything, they could be 40 points up by half-time."

Wales have the encouragement of having beaten France in the past two meetings in Cardiff and victory by a sufficiently wide margin, coupled with an Ireland success over England, could conceivably see Wales taking the championship.

That is unlikely as the wide expanses of Wembley, which is again a 72,000 sell-out, would appear to favour France's gifted runners, one of whom, Philippe Bernat-Salles, would become only the fifth player in the history of the Five Nations to score in every game should he add to his tally of tries against England, Scotland and Ireland.

Wales, too, will be hampered by the absence of Allan Bateman whose daughter, Naomi, 6, suddenly lost 80 per cent of her sight earlier this week. The centre, who withdrew yesterday, has not trained and has been sleeping at the hospital where Naomi is being treated.

Neil Boobyer, of Llanelli, comes in for his sixth cap with Dafydd James, of Pontypridd, moving onto the replacements' bench. It is significant, too, that Clive Griffiths has been drafted in to help with Wales's defensive formations.

Maso has been preaching the need for discipline among his players, imploring them not to be provoked by Wales, knowing that any indiscretion by some of his more volatile charges, such as Franck Tournaire, will be punished by the boot of Neil Jenkins.

But, despite anything Jenkins might achieve, it is difficult to look beyond a victory for France, notwithstanding Howley's assertion that it was time Wales "took a big scalp".

Ibañez, his counterpart, should climb the steps to the Royal Box to claim the trophy from Allan Hosie, the chairman of the Five Nations Committee. Ironically, Ibañez would be retracing the route taken 50 years ago by Ken Jones, a double grand-slam winner with Wales.

As a member of the Great Britain sprint relay team in 1948, he collected an Olympic gold medal, only to lose it two days later when the United States, who had been disqualified, were reinstated on appeal. On this occasion, one cannot see France being denied the glittering prize.

Diary, page 22

TOMORROW'S TEAMS AT WEMBLEY

WALES		**FRANCE**	
K A Morgan (Pontypridd)	15	J-L Sadourny (Colomiers)	
W T Proctor (Llanelli)	14	P Bernat-Salles (Pau)	
N Boobyer (Llanelli)	13	C Lamaison (Brive)	
L B Davies (Cardiff)	12	S Glas (Bourgoin)	
G Thomas (Bridgend)	11	X Garbajosa (Toulouse)	
N R Jenkins (Pontypridd)	10	T Castaignède (Newcastle)	
R Howley (Cardiff, captain)	9	P Carbonneau (Brive)	
A L P Lewis (Cardiff)	1	*C Califano (Toulouse)*	
G R Jenkins (Swansea)	2	R Ibañez (Dax, captain)	
D Young (Cardiff)	3	F Tournaire (Toulouse)	
M J Voyle (Llanelli)	4	O Brouzet (Bègles-Bordeaux)	
A P Moore (Swansea)	5	F Pelous (Toulouse)	
R C Appleyard (Swansea)	6	M Lièvremont (Stade Français)	
C L Charvis (Swansea)	7	O Magne (Brive)	
S Davies (Swansea)	8	T Lièvremont (Perpignan)	

Referee: P Marshall (Australia)

REPLACEMENTS: 16 D James (Pontypridd), 17 B Hayward (Ebbw Vale), 18 P John (Pontypridd), 19 K P Jones (Ebbw Vale), 20 W S Roy (Pontypridd), 21 L Mustoe (Cardiff), 22 J M Humphreys (Cardiff)

REPLACEMENTS: 16 F Gaithié (Colomiers), 17 D Aucagne (Pau), 18 J-M Aue (Castres), 19 P Benetton (Agen), 20 T Cleda (Pau), 21 C Soulette (Béziers), 22 M dal Maso (Agen)

TV: live on BBC2 from 2.30pm

Magne made for modern game

'No one is quicker to clean up loose ball and drive it on'

DAVID HANDS



It is a sunny morning at Chateau Ricard, France's habitual retreat before a Five Nations Championship match. A group of schoolchildren gaze at the French backs, skylarking around on the training field with Pierre Villepreux, their coach — the hard work comes in the afternoon, behind closed doors.

The grown-ups watch the forwards, without whom the backs cannot perform. Their work, at restarts and lineouts, is far from perfect but they take it seriously. None more so than Olivier Magne.

As Christophe Lamaison drops out, the catcher shouts "Oui". No one shouts more definitively than Magne; no one is quicker to clear up loose ball, to drive it on and make it available to the waiting Philippe Carbonneau.

When France beat Scotland 51-17, Murrayfield must have been sick of the sight of Magne. The flank forward was here, there, everywhere, comfortable with the ball in hand, with the cut-out pass, with the grub-kick ahead; the perfect exposition of a modern rugby player. Which is what Magne, 24, believes himself to be.

There is a matter-of-factness about Magne that reminds one irresistibly of his England equivalent, Neil Back — though, at 6ft 2in and nearly 15st, he is somewhat bigger. The same sense of surprise that all-round skill should even be a debating point.

Yet he remains a relative newcomer to the France XV; the game against Wales tomorrow at Wembley will be his thirteenth cap, his first having come against Wales last season. In that brief time he has won a grand slam and has been discarded, the French selectors preferring Laurent Cabannes against South Africa last November though, in the light of the results, Magne may not have been altogether unhappy to have missed that series.

It was also a reflection of his initial form when he joined Brive, then the Heineken Cup holders, from Dax at the start of this season. Brive, having sold Gregory Kacala, the huge Pole, to Cardiff, made Dax an offer for Magne, who relished the opportunity. "Brive are one of the four or five fully-professional clubs in France, where the players train every day," he said. "Dax are only part-time, they are still amateur.

"I knew that, if I wanted to play international rugby, I would have to play rugby full-time." However, Brive perceived him as a one-dimensional player, good with the ball in hand, not strong enough in the tackle — another echo of Back's early relationship with England. He took nearly three months to settle into their pattern of play, which allowed the France selectors to have one final look at the dashing Cabannes.

This year, however, as France go for a back-to-back grand slam, Magne is the man. Cabannes may have cut more of a swagger but somehow you would not think of him putting boot to ball if it could possibly be avoided; Magne regards that as merely one more aspect of a professional player's stock-in-trade. Again like Back, he is a talented exponent of seven-a-side rugby, and played for France in the World Cup Sevens in Hong Kong last year.

One of four brothers who grew up on a farm in the Auvergne, he gravitated to Aurillac rugby club as a five year-old. Rugby is the main sport in the town and the surrounding region and, though the young Magne enjoyed football, handball, athletics and skiing, rugby became the vehicle at which he could excel.

At one time he played fly half, before moving into the forwards. He was guided in his burgeoning career by Pierre Perez and, significantly, Victor Boffelli, the Aurillac back-row forward who won 18 caps between 1971 and 1975. However, the club remained in the second division, so while he worked his way through France's junior representative teams, Magne, having acquired a business diploma, accepted the chance to play for Dax.

Not only were they a first-division club, they offered the chance of European rugby. "That helped me to international level," Magne said. "The Heineken Cup gives you matches against international opponents and, when the team plays well, individuals put together a series of good performances which attract attention."

His girlfriend is a sister of Richard Dourthe, the Dax full back, and of the wife of Raphael Ibañez, the Dax and now France captain, but long-term relationships appear to be on hold as Magne cements his place in the national side. "Rugby takes up so much time that I would rather concentrate on it now and wait for the responsibility that a wife and family brings," he said. "I would not want a part-time marriage.

"For me rugby is no longer a game for this position or that position, outside the special demands of the lineout and the scrum. I will play in whatever style the team demands — that's the modern game and you have to accept it. I don't find it difficult adapting to other players."

Magne makes light not only of his own limited international experience but that of the Lièvremont brothers, Marc and Thomas, with whom he plays tomorrow. The back-row trio have also to support the running patterns of France's talented fly half, Thomas Castaignède, and they have succeeded admirably so far.

Their first outing together, if only for a brief period, came against England in February when Marc Lièvremont was a first-half replacement. That match came a week after Brive's huge disappointment when they lost the Heineken Cup final to Bath and the Corrèze was plunged into mourning.

"The international against England was another match, one that has a special place for Frenchmen," Magne said. "I was so proud to have won that match because we had been very worried beforehand — we were not sure where we were going after the heavy defeat by South Africa.

"I am part of a changing generation, which prepares in a way that other players of the past may not have done." Last year, part of Magne's preparations involved dyeing his hair blond for a bet; others have found that blond flankers catch the selectors' eye more readily. This year, he is back to normal: maybe that is a sign that Magne has arrived.

DAVID ROGERS / ALLSPORT



Magne breaks through the Ireland defence during last month's international in Paris

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in union
Lloyds and TSB, sponsors of Five Nations rugby.

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

Events at Barnsley last weekend revived many bleak memories of the bad old days of English football. **Mark Hodkinson**, in the stand, and **Steve McManaman**, on the pitch, offer contrasting perspectives

Harshest lessons in the game of life





Fjortoft apprehends one of the irate fans desperate to get their hands on Willard, whose red-card technique only served to heighten the mounting anger. Photographs: Ian Hodgson

LIFE AT THE TOP

The prophecy is often uttered at football grounds. It is, of course, a euphemism. "There's going to be a riot here," they say, whenever the passion borders on hostility.

At Oakwell last Saturday the euphemism was a truism. Gary Willard, the referee in charge of Barnsley's match against Liverpool, seemed to be a man tired of the banality of life, a man with an outlandish death wish.

In a game with nothing above the normal level of irascibility, he sent off three Barnsley players. If the reason for the dismissals was vague, there was nothing unequivocal about the actual procedure of sending them from the field. The cards were held up defiantly, victoriously almost, as if he was holding aloft a flag; a unique flag representing a nation of one. The body language was all wrong. There was no "sorry, son, had to do it", apologetic smile, or a shrug of the shoulders. It was showy, bloody-minded sternness, more of a "get off my pitch, you insolent fool".

Willard chose precisely the wrong place to stage his three-card trick. Barnsley does not suffer fools and it has a historical mistrust of authority. While, like most clubs, Barnsley has undergone what sociologists call "embourgoisement" — you know, serviettes supplied with the pies, toilets that flush, fans that applaud David Seaman because he is the England goalkeeper, etc — there remains a mass of support based on fierce parochialism.

They are ex-miners, and sons of ex-miners, once the aristocracy of the working class, now left with too much time on their hands to ponder Barnsley's next match. Back in the 1970s, they saw through the smoke and mirrors and detected that the National Coal Board had a secret agenda. They were patronised, told that too much time underground had made them overfond of baseless conspiracy theories. In the 1980s the pits duly closed and their frustration was played out against lines of policemen.

The resentment, institutionalised now, still exists in Barnsley. The football club has become a focus for regional pride and naked passion: a two-fingered wave back to a country that they believe has consigned them to afternoon television and twice-weekly trips to the job club.

Their nemesis arrived last weekend in the shape of a divorced father-of-two civil servant with a Saturday job as a football referee. There are "honest" fouls in football — a clip of the heel, a shift of weight to slow up an opponent's run — and there are dishonest ones, too. Willard permitted the cynical, the puerile and the snide but gleefully punished the trivial. After this injustice had been reinforced beyond the point of tolerance, ill-feeling spread through Oakwell like a malignant Mexican wave. The tension was more sinister and ugly than portrayed throughout this week. The death of a Fulham supporter and the various outbreaks of sports-related violence provided a cover for Barnsley.

Willard was attacked from all angles and the game was eclipsed by another sick sport as police, stewards and players intercepted various beer-bellies on legs hurtling towards a seemingly impervious figure. Make no mistake, their plan was to do him serious harm and, without overplaying the drama, for a good while it looked as if the mob held the upper hand and we were to see Willard set upon.

The bravery of the players, Fjortoft, Ince and Redfearn in particular, was commendable. The Barnsley supporters who applauded the pitch invaders, however, deserved nothing but contempt. In the streets around Oakwell they screamed into television cameras that their club was being persecuted; Willard was a vindictive agent of the FA Carling Premiership that wanted to relegate Barnsley and maintain its closed shop of big-city clubs.

> 'The football club has become a focus for regional pride and naked passion'

Their anger is understandable, even if their argument is specious. Barnsley have been good business for the Premier League. Their stirring battles with football's elite have made absorbing theatre. The fight against relegation has been a *Rocky* film transmuted to football; at one point they are flailing and helpless, then a string of wins, a spring in their step and hope is renewed. Also, the Premier League would not be so gauche as to send Willard as the angel of death; it would, if it was driven by malevolence, draw the breath from the club surreptitiously without recourse to melodrama.

The combination of an abysmal refereeing display and a tempestuous Oakwell crowd was pretty much unique and should be viewed as such. A return to perimeter fences, a deduction of points or a hefty fine is an arbitrary punishment, hurting the majority for the few. Barnsley is what Barnsley is. If the goading is relentless and considered unfair, it will retaliate. The club can bring Premiership football to the town but it cannot instantly bring a saintliness and civility to the part of its community that seeks out martyrdom.

This is not to condone or canvass a metaphorical shrug of the shoulders, but a simple fact. All those that have this week lamented and squealed surprise that thuggery still exists within football are foolish. Hate, compassion and love are part of the human condition and sport is merely a reflection of life.

Our best hope is that the balance falls most frequently on the side of compassion and love, and violent afternoons at Oakwell are rare; very rare.

MARK HODKINSON

Mad moments that must not obscure real picture

STEVE McMANAMAN

Fans running on to the pitch is never a comfortable experience for a player, but when the fan looks about 16st, is built like a brick outhouse and heading straight for you... now that is uncomfortable. But that's the position I found myself in at Barnsley last Saturday and I did the decent thing — I got out of the way. There were a few things going through my mind.

The first was whether he was coming after me. I thought not, because he didn't have any reason other than that I was a member of the opposition and he clearly hated the referee more after Barnsley's second player had been dimissed.

The second thought was whether I should stop him. If he had been 3½st and 6 years old, I might have considered it. But as he was not a midget, it was a case of getting out of the way and letting someone with a bit of meat on them get him.

I could see that he was heading for the referee, but I could also see that there were plenty of stewards ready to catch him before he could reach Mr Willard.

In those circumstances, I wasn't about to start doing other people's jobs for them. Gordon Taylor, our Professional Footballers' Association boss, has since said that players must not get involved with fans and he has a point — especially when they are bigger than you.

As it happens, Jan Aage Fjortoft jumped on the pitch invader and stopped him. Fair play, but then Jan Aage is bigger than me. Later in the game, Paul Ince did the same thing, with a rugby tackle on another supporter.

What you don't want is for a player to get injured when he gets involved with a supporter. It's a fine balance between doing the right thing, which Incey clearly thought he was, and letting other people do the jobs that they are paid for.

The Barnsley stewards did a decent job. People did get on to the pitch, but they were never going to do any harm because there were plenty of stewards around. It was still a mad game, though. There are serious implications when supporters run on to the pitch and it doesn't do English football any good when the pictures we saw on Saturday are beamed around the world.

In saying that, it was just a mad March day and it is not a growing trend. It was hot and there was tension; their supporters were bound to be uptight and when they had three players sent off it was likely to be fraught.

I managed to get some of the blame for the pitch invasions along with the referee. When I scored the winning goal in the final minute, some of our supporters ran on to the pitch and celebrated by mobbing me. I was blamed for inciting them with my celebration.

I resent that. For a start, I did not leave the field of play, I didn't jump into the crowd; they just dived over and dragged me off. Secondly, there was no malice in my celebration. There were a few seconds left, I had scored the winning goal and I was relieved because we had let a side with nine men come back into the game. Any player would have celebrated that.

Our supporters had watched the Barnsley fans come on when they had equalised with ten men and it was infectious; they copied the opposing fans. It was just a celebration, nothing more sinister.

In truth, my celebration was probably coloured by things that had occurred during the match. It was a niggly game and there was plenty of off-the-ball stuff. Barnsley were committed: they don't want to go down and so they fought hard. We needed to win to keep our title hopes alive.

As for the referee, I honestly think he made the right decisions. Under the rules of the game, he had no choice but to show the red card for the first offence. The third dismissal in the final minutes was also justified.

As for the middle red card, lots of people have said that Alan Hansen's comments on *Match of the Day* were misguided. He said that it wasn't a sending-off because Michael Owen is too small. Had he been bigger, the Barnsley defender would have smacked him in the chest and not the face. What a ridiculous statement.

The only mistake Mr Willard made was to create confusion when he walked off the pitch. Apparently, he was told to go by a steward, but he didn't tell anyone what was happening. We wandered around for a while and began to think that the game had been abandoned. It would have been a fittingly mad end to a mad afternoon.

Half-pay Falkirk go for compensation

KEVIN McCARRA



Scottish commentary

TROPHIES can be put to unconventional use and Falkirk are employing the Tennents Scottish Cup as a collection can. With the club £1.5 million in debt and in the hands of the liquidators, the contribution from their appearance against Heart of Midlothian in the semi-final at Ibrox this afternoon will be gratefully appreciated.

The donation they seek most of all, however, is the proceeds from the final, where they would play either Celtic or Rangers, who meet at Celtic Park tomorrow. Given Falkirk's presence in the Bell's Scottish League first division, it might appear presumptuous of Alex Totten's side to consider themselves capable of defeating Hearts.

A year ago, however, Falkirk overcame Celtic to reach the Scottish Cup final, where they lost to Kilmarnock. If one overlooks the small matter of bankruptcy, little has changed at the Brockville club over the past 12 months. The composition of the squad has altered only slightly and the side does not appear paralysed by gloom.

The players, who have been forced to accept a 50 per cent cut in wages for the time being, might have been poisoned by self pity by now were it not for the exhilaration, sympathy and attention that progress in the Scottish Cup has brought them. In the quarter-final, at Brockville, there was gusto in the 3-0 win over St Johnstone.

None the less, today's tie is liable to bring confirmation that Hearts are no longer the skittish club that assembled a long sequence of semi-final embarrassments. Jim Jefferies, their manager, was previously in charge of Falkirk and took with him from Brockville such players as Steve Fulton and David Weir.

They retain a fondness for their old club, but they have also climbed higher and empathy should not be enough to take them back to the same level as the first division side.

As ever, it is the meeting of the Old Firm that presents the imponderables, with the element of uncertainty further enlarged by recent events. In the premier division, Rangers have at last found acceptable form, with Ally McCoist's interventions ensuring that the quest for a victory need no longer be so protracted or so susceptible to disappointment. The forward, 35, who yesterday received the Bell's player-of-the-month award for April, has scored six goals in his past five games.

These statistics should be treated with caution. The goals in the league have come against Motherwell, Dunfermline Athletic and Hibernian, who are, respectively, seventh, ninth and tenth. In the cup, McCoist scored twice against Dundee, the leaders of the first division. Although he cannot be held accountable for the quality of Rangers' opponents, he has still to demonstrate that his powers are fully restored.

Celtic, too, have a great deal to prove. The players have been given three days off this week in an attempt to restore freshness. The rigours of the season explain tiredness, but tension has played its part in robbing Celtic of precision during recent draws with Dundee United and Hearts. The chance to win the treble exists, but that possibility also creates strains.

Such pressures are a new experience to a rebuilt team composed, generally, of signings who have not known extravagant success. Wim Jansen's side continues to look as steely as ever in defence, but in the midst of all the uproar and unease of the Old Firm tie it will have to recover panache in attack. Celtic have scored only two goals in the past three matches and neither of them was supplied by a forward.

Practical considerations trouble both managers. Stéphane Mahe, of Celtic, will miss the rest of the season while Jackie McNamara's ankle injury and Paul Lambert's influenza are causing concern. Rangers may well be without Sergio Porrini and Andy Goram.

Owen favourite to clinch rare double

NAMING the only player to lift the Professional Footballers' Association Player of the Year and Young Player awards in the same season is a trivia question to fox even the most dedicated of football buffs (Matt Dickinson writes). The answer is Andy Gray, of Aston Villa, in 1977.

It is a remarkable feat, but one that could be repeated tomorrow night by Michael Owen, the Liverpool prodigy. Before this season, the 18 year-old had started just one league game. A matter of months and 19 senior goals later, he seems certain to travel to the World Cup in France this summer.

John Hartson, the West Ham United striker, is also nominated in both categories, but Owen will be odds-on favourite for the Young Player award, which is sponsored by *The Times*.

The unusual lack of an outstanding candidate for the senior award, won by Alan Shearer last year, will have increased his hopes of a rare double. Dennis Bergkamp will be most people's favourite because of his breathtaking form before Christmas, and the early voting deadline is likely to have helped his cause. The Arsenal and Holland striker is enduring a three-match suspension for elbowing Steve Lomas, the West Ham midfield player, in the face, but the flash of temper came after the closing date to spare him condemnation by poll from his fellow pros.

Manchester United provide two nominees but, surprisingly, not Peter Schmeichel nor Ryan Giggs. Andy Cole and David Beckham are the club's chosen pair. Paul Scholes may also feel that he deserves to be among the senior players rather than the under-23s.

Dion Dublin completes the senior list, while Darren Huckerby, his attacking accomplice at Coventry City, is a deserved nomination for the Young Player award.

NOMINEES: Player of the year: David Beckham, Andy Cole (both Manchester United), Dion Dublin (Coventry City), John Hartson (West Ham United), Dennis Bergkamp (Arsenal), Michael Owen (Liverpool). Young player of the year: Michael Owen (Liverpool), John Hartson (West Ham United), Darren Huckerby (Coventry City), Rio Ferdinand (West Ham United), Kevin Davies (Southampton) Nicky Butt, Paul Scholes (both Manchester United)

Beck on verge of leaving

BY MATT DICKINSON

AN OVERSEAS international throwing a tantrum? It could only be Middlesbrough, where Mikkel Beck, the club's Denmark international, has threatened to leave because he has been relegated to the substitutes' bench.

Bryan Robson, the manager, is unlikely to be too concerned, given that he has signed three strikers — Hamilton Ricard, Alun Armstrong and Marco Branca — in the past two months, and it seems certain that Beck will leave Riverside Stadium this summer.

Beck, however, fears that will not be soon enough to rescue his chances of joining the Denmark squad for the World Cup in France in June. The 24 year-old, who started the season as first-choice forward and has scored 15 goals, said: "I was not happy about being left on the bench again for the Coca-Cola Cup final against Chelsea. There was not a lot I could do when I came on because we were already 1-0 down.

"It's very frustrating for me. I thought this would be my season. I was pleased with my play and my scoring. But now I'm not happy at all. I want to play and I know I am good enough.

"I'll have to see what happens in the next couple of weeks. It can't go on like this. If I don't play for Middlesbrough, I'm not good enough to play for Denmark."

While Beck seems certain not to figure at West Bromwich Albion today in the Nationwide League first division fixture, Paul Gascoigne is likely to start his first game since moving to the North-East from Rangers. Gascoigne's team-mates claim that he has been superb in training this week.

Middlesbrough cannot afford to lose any ground to the top two sides in the division, although it will be some relief to them that their promotion rivals also face tricky games.

Nottingham Forest, the leaders, entertain Ipswich Town whose manager, George Burley, has guided his team to five successive wins in a 16-match unbeaten run. Second-placed Sunderland, one point ahead of Middlesbrough, must travel to Tranmere Rovers.

At the other end of the table, Martin Gregory, the Portsmouth chairman, has abandoned plans to sell the Fratton Park club to Vince Wolanin, an American property developer, and announced that he will invest £10 million himself.

Gregory, who wrested control of Portsmouth from Terry Venables in January, has revealed plans to buy land adjacent to Fratton Park to build a new 30,000 all-seater stadium.

He has now pulled out of negotiations with Wolanin and Brian Howe, the rock star, who wanted to invest £90 million to transform Portsmouth into an American-style sports club.

"Their offers have no credibility and I've told them I don't want to hear from them again," Gregory said. He now plans to work with Rob Hill, a British property developer, to buy land belonging to Railtrack.

هكذا من الاصل

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

Filling his boots in a great tradition

How a determined captain has begun to revive the glory days for the FA Cup semi-finalists



Curle and his present-day squad are attempting to emerge from the shadow of the Wolverhampton Wanderers legends. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

THE plaque on the door says it is a boot room. It does not look much like a boot room. There is shag-pile carpet on the floor and a conference table over by the wall surrounded by regal, high-backed chairs. Outside, some men in suits carrying either folders or briefcases are waiting to go in for a meeting.

The only concessions to football are some frames on the wall. One contains a picture of Billy Wright leading the England team out at Wembley against Scotland on April 11, 1959, the occasion of his hundredth cap. Next to that frame, there are others that hold some of the many England shirts he wore. They look small and dowdy but wonderfully simple compared with today's screaming designs.

This is Billy's Boot Room, one of the many tributes to the great man at modern-day Molineux. Outside, on the stadium forecourt, there is a statue of the centre half in action. One of the stands is named after him. Inside, the man who plays in his position for Wolverhampton Wanderers smiles wryly. "There is a legend at every turn at this club," Keith Curle said.

And then there is a knock on the door. A face with familiar, neat, tight features appears round the corner. He scored a goal with that face once in the Seventies. I remember it from *Match of the Day* in black and white. A free kick hit him on it, wrong-footed the goalkeeper and the ball rolled in. He wants to start his meeting. "We'd better not upset the MD," Curle said. It is John Richards.

OLIVER HOLT



Tomorrow, at Villa Park, Curle and his Wolverhampton Wanderers team will try to take the first great step towards shaking off some of the historical baggage that seems to have grown heavier and heavier on their shoulders as their attempts to rid themselves of the label of mediocrity that goes with being a fallen giant in the Nationwide League first division have ended in failure.

If they beat Arsenal, a team who have translated their past victories into present pre-eminence, they will become the first Wolves side since 1960 to appear in an FA Cup Final. By then, the Premiership may have eluded them for another season but an appearance at Wembley would do much to assuage the growing frustrations of their owner, Sir Jack Hayward.

Curle, the Wolves captain, the man who swears he has not allowed any thoughts of lifting the Cup to sneak even into the back of his mind, knows all about playing for fallen giants. He spent five years trying to restore Manchester City to former glories before the attempt ended in the rude shock of relegation. He knows there are similarities between the clubs.

"When you talk to any Wolverhampton supporters," he said, "the names of the past eras here trip off their tongue. It was the same at Man City. Bell, Lee, Summerbee; I would not say you get it rammed down your throat, but you are made aware of it and I fully appreciate that. Within every football club, there has to be room for past greats.

"Here, it is like something you cannot hope to emulate or anything like that because it is absolutely magnificent and it is part of the foundation of this football club. But there is also a part to be played by the present-day footballers. In the players' lounge, it has always been pictures of yesteryear and shirts that had been donated by ex-players and everything like that, and that is all being changed.

"There are going to be pictures of the present football team and the present squad. If you get in the first-team squad, you get your picture on the wall in the players' lounge. Our lounge today is for the players of today. There is a place for the history of the club but it is not in the players' lounge. That is going to upset a few people."

Curle knows, of course, that the best way of turning the club's heritage into a glorious accoutrement rather than a hulking millstone is to put the first division in the past. That is why he played on when he tweaked a hamstring against Portsmouth last week and put his place in the match tomorrow in jeopardy.

He felt the hamstring go, but this player whose commitment to the cause has sometimes been questioned by his critics played on anyway. Wolves were clinging on to a 1-0 lead at the time and, with their hopes of the play-offs hanging by a thread, he knew that three points were essential to keep the dream alive. Because of his selflessness last Sunday, he only has a 50-50 chance of being in the Wolves line-up tomorrow.

"If we had been 2-0 up I would have come straight off," he said, "not a problem. I was thinking about the semi-final, but once we get involved in a game I have to win that game. I know that we have got seven games left now in the league and we have to win all seven. I knew that I could get through the game and I was just praying that I did not make it any worse.

"It is, probably going to be the last chance I am going to get of playing in an FA Cup Final. The closest I got was when I arrived at Wimbledon the year after they won it. I still get a lot of people who thought that I played. A lot of them seem to think I was Terry Phelan. I have not even thought about lifting the Cup, even when I saw little Dennis [Wise] at Wembley with the Coca-Cola Cup on Sunday. You can't allow yourself to do it. The disappointment if you get beat: shocking.

"But the league is still the most important thing. I do not want to spend another year in the first division. If you get to the Cup Final and win the Cup, then looking back on it, it would be a consolation. But if you get beat in the semi-finals and you end up missing out on the play-offs, then for me personally it is another year wasted because I am still playing first-division football, which I don't want."

Curle, 34, a forthright man, articulate and amicable with a reputation for enjoying a wind-up, deserves his chance of a day in the sun. He had a big-money move when City paid £2.5 million for him in 1991 and he has won three England caps, but he has worked long and hard for the success that has taken him from a flat above a supermarket in Bristol to a house in a Cheshire village with electronic gates and sleek cars in the drive.

He began his career in the lower leagues, flitting between Bristol Rovers, Torquay United and Bristol City. He was once sold because Marco Gabbiadini outsprinted him when Curle was in the midst of his first game back from injury. The second time he was transferred, his value had shot up — from £5,000 to £10,000.

'If he leads Wolves to Wembley for the first time in nearly 40 years, in one way he will have done justice to the memory of Billy Wright'

"If people said 'typical silver-spoon footballer, guaranteed to make it, always had everything, everybody knew he was going to be a footballer, didn't have to work hard, relied on natural talent' and everything like that, that is the exact opposite to me. I have not had it tough but I was brought up by my mum, single parent, three kids, she was the manageress at a supermarket and that was it.

"I only ever had one new pair of football boots. All the others were hand-me-downs. I played for the local team. We had to move because my mum got another job, I played for my village team, couldn't get in the village football team so I had to be sub.

"Then I went to the local school and there were seven of us affiliated to local clubs. Out of the seven, I was the last one expected to get on. But I was the only one who made it."

Tomorrow, he can begin to end the process of making good. "We have got absolutely nothing to lose," he said. They may never erect statues of him outside Molineux, but if Curle leads Wolves on to Wembley for the first time in nearly 40 years, in one way, at least, he will have done justice to the memory of Billy Wright.

Todd faces FA over outburst

COLIN TODD, the Bolton Wanderers manager, looks certain to be ordered before the Football Association (FA) after criticising Premiership referees yesterday.

Todd, whose struggling side has one of the worst disciplinary records in the Premiership this season, with five players sent off in league games, said that many leading referees are not being fair and honest.

"There has been a lot said about referees by different managers," he said. "I've been very patient because we, throughout the season, have had a lot of decisions go against us. We have a difficult job as managers and obviously referees have. But they have got to be fair and they have got to be honest, and I don't think a lot of them are at this moment in time."

Steve Double, the FA spokesman, said: "To accuse Premiership referees of dishonesty is an extremely serious allegation."

Tim Flowers, the England and Blackburn Rovers goalkeeper, is still in doubt for the World Cup finals because of a shoulder injury. He went into hospital yesterday for an exploratory operation.

Should further hospital attention be needed, Flowers could miss the remainder of the season, putting his World Cup hopes at risk. However, Blackburn are hopeful that keyhole surgery will solve the problem.

Saunders sees hope in Newcastle's frailties

BY RICHARD HOBSON

AS A Wales international of experience and repute, Dean Saunders, 33, knows all about life as the underdog. Sometimes the odds are overturned, but more often the favourite triumphs. Football has a natural order that goes undisturbed more often than romantics would wish.

Tomorrow, however, comes a fixture that has "possible upset" branded upon it. Newcastle United's slump in results and internal travails make the prospect of Sheffield United winning the FA Cup semi-final at Old Trafford far stronger than their Nationwide League division one status suggests. Surprise? Yes, of course. But significant shock? Certainly not.

Saunders said: "You could say that Newcastle have such good players they are bound to come good sooner rather than later, or that their name is on the Cup because they have had a relatively easy draw.

"On the other hand ... they have had a lot of turmoil and their form is perhaps the worst of any team in the Premiership. I think we have a good chance. We have some big, strong players here, some honest lads, and we can match them for effort. Stevenage Borough showed if you put pressure on them you can get a lucky break."

The one unknown for Sheffield is their response to the occasion. Most of the players will never have appeared in a game of such magnitude. Saunders remembers how Rob Jones seized up with cramp in both legs 20 minutes from the end of a semi-final between Liverpool and Portsmouth six years ago. It became apparent that the problem stemmed from nerves — and Jones was an England international.

Liverpool went on to beat Sunderland in the final and provide Saunders with his only FA Cup medal. He subsequently left for Aston Villa and then joined Galatasaray, helping them to win the Turkish Cup two years ago. Life away from football in Turkey, however, he found somewhat harder to comprehend. An initiation ceremony, conducted by supporters, saw him annointed with the blood of a freshly-slaughtered sheep.



Saunders: well travelled

"The idea was that it brought the team luck," Saunders recalled. "Some of the sheep would be grazing on the pitch beforehand. I used to look at them and think 'eat as much as you can, you haven't got long'."

What prompted him to return was the poor health of his asthmatic daughter, Louise, who was taken to hospital on three separate occasions because of the effects of traffic fumes and smog.

Yet the move to Nottingham Forest brought little happiness, either. The club, embroiled in a takeover saga, suffered relegation last season and he lost his place at the start of the new campaign. Those final months at the City Ground were his unhappiest in football, and it says much for the way that he fell from grace under Dave Bassett that Forest allowed him to leave on a free transfer just three months after rejecting a £500,000 bid from Everton.

Now, though, having recovered from a hamstring injury that kept him out for a month, his faith in the game is restored. "It has been a great turnaround," Saunders said. "To be honest, I expected us to be higher up the table than sixth, but certainly not to be in the Cup at this stage. It is a great opportunity to get to Wembley and, at my age, it might be the last chance."

FA CUP – THE DEPRIVED REGIONS

Newcastle for the Cup? Historical precedent is certainly no aid, Richard Whitehead writes.

WHISPER it around fans of their nearest neighbours, but an FA Cup victory for Newcastle United, Sheffield United or Wolverhampton Wanderers at Wembley on May 16 would provide regional aid for what, in football terms, are deprived areas.

The postwar FA Cup records of the North East, West Midlands and Yorkshire are lamentable, but the geographical split of this year's last four has given those neglected areas a chance to catch up a little with the high rollers of London, the North West and Merseyside.

North East supporters are renowned for their passion and the region continues to produce talented players, but the last time the FA Cup was in residence was 1973 the year when Sunderland gave us Ian Porterfield's goal, Jim Montgomery's save and Bob Stokoe's hat.

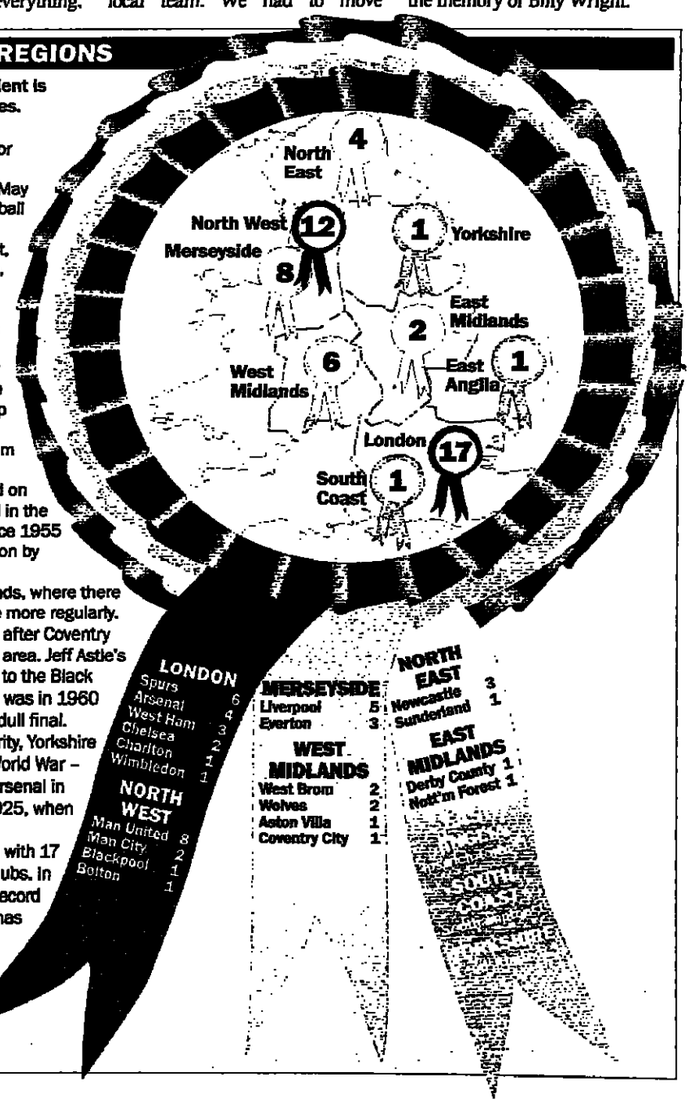
Newcastle have a proud Cup tradition based on exploits in the early years of the century and in the 1950s, but they have not won the trophy since 1955 and not reached a final since their humiliation by Liverpool 24 years ago.

The situation is no better in the West Midlands, where there are five clubs that might expect to challenge more regularly. John Sillett's joyous dance around Wembley after Coventry City's win in 1987 was the last victory for the area. Jeff Astle's goal for West Bromwich Albion took the Cup to the Black Country in 1968, but the last win for Wolves was in 1960 when they overcame Blackburn Rovers in a dull final.

For a county that likes to boast of its superiority, Yorkshire has just one FA Cup win since the Second World War – the attritional victory by Leeds United over Arsenal in 1972. Sheffield United's last win came in 1925, when Fred Tunstall's goal beat Cardiff City.

The most successful postwar area is London with 17 Cup-winning seasons, divided between six clubs. In that time, Tottenham Hotspur have the best record in the capital with six wins. The North West has 12, of which Manchester United provide an impressive eight. Merseyside has eight wins, Liverpool edging out Everton 5-3.

Conclusion: get your money on Arsenal for the Cup in 98.



FOOTBALL SATURDAY

FA CUP SEMI-FINALS

SHEFFIELD UNITED
v
NEWCASTLE UNITED
Tomorrow, 3.0 (sold out)



Oliver Holt

They can leave the romance to Arsenal and Wolverhampton Wanderers on FA Cup semi-final day. This match is all about the grim battle for the recovery of a club's dignity that has slowly but surely enveloped Newcastle United in recent weeks. If they fall at Old Trafford tomorrow, they will have lost their last chance of redemption and it will be a long, long summer on Tyneside.

The Cup run has been a strange odyssey for Kenny Dalglish and his side this season, both the competition that damned them as arrogant FA Carling Premiership braggarts who had forgotten the spirit of the Cup and also the one thing that offered them the prospect of salvation and the chance for Dalglish to bring the North-East the trophy that Kevin Keegan could not deliver.

In the memory, it seems as though the club's Premiership form began to fall apart almost from the day that they were pulled out of the fourth round hat with Stevenage Borough and the flood of criticism was unleashed upon them. Since then, they have clung to the Cup as if it gave them temporary respite from their plunging league form.

They seem to be edging slowly, tortuously, clear of relegation as much through the inadequacies of others than through any merits of their own, and making the final might silence their critics and give them the boost they need to move beyond the bottom three at last.

It might also purge the club of some of the unpleasant memories left by the antics of Douglas Hall and Freddie Shepherd and their forced resignations from the board. It has come too late to save them but victory at Wembley would at least give the supporters some compensation for having their faith so roundly abused by those who should have known better.

In their way, of course, stand Sheffield United, a team led by a caretaker manager, Steve Thompson. They will feel, quite understandably, that Newcastle are ripe for a giantkilling and, with experienced hands such as Dean Saunders, Nicky Marker and Graham Stuart in their ranks, they will be far from an easy proposition.

They will be further encouraged by the news yesterday that Alan Kelly, the goalkeeper, has recovered from bruised ribs and will play. Kelly performed with distinction in both the quarter-final games against Coventry City, particularly in the penalty shoot-out when his three saves were the biggest factor in United's progress. The match provides an opportunity to compare his form with that of Shay Given, of Newcastle, who is his rival for the Ireland goalkeeper's shirt.

Chris Short, who has a hamstring injury, and Roger Nilsen, calf, the defenders who have not played since the quarter-final, trained yesterday and will undergo fitness tests tomorrow.

Much attention will inevitably fall on Alan Shearer, who is playing in his first Cup semi-final. He has scored five goals since his return from injury, four of them in the Cup.

"It is up to other people to judge me, they always have done, but the most important thing is I feel fit and I feel confident and am really looking forward to the game," Shearer said. "It is the furthest I've ever got in the competition, which is probably the case for most of the lads, but it is something we're all looking forward to."

If Sheffield United win, then perhaps there will be romance after all, but for most the day will be dominated by the fate that befalls Newcastle. If they lose, there will be those who rejoice in another failure for the club that has come so quickly to represent so much that is wrong with modern football. If they succeed, there will be many who take pleasure in a great chunk of compensation for the proud supporters of a club steeped in tradition. One way or another, it will be their day.

SHEFFIELD UNITED (probable: 3-5-2): A Kelly — D Holdsworth, L Sandford, T Dellas — V Borbokis, R Ford, N Marker, G Stuart, W Quinn — D Saunders, Marcelo
NEWCASTLE UNITED (probable, 3-5-2): S Given — D Peacock, S Pearce, A Pistone — W Barton, K Gillespie, D Batty, J Barnes, T Ketsbaia — A Andersson, A Shearer
Referee: G Poll

■ TELEVISION: Tomorrow: Live on Sky Sports 2, from 2pm.
■ PREDICTION: Newcastle to win, Shearer to score.

WOLVERHAMPTON W
v
ARSENAL
Tomorrow, 12.0 (sold out)



Rob Hughes

Can anything capture the lure of the FA Cup better than Sir Jack Hayward, 74, the president, benefactor and lifelong dreamer of watching his Wolves in the final at Wembley, flying in from the Bahamas for the semi-final against Arsenal at noon tomorrow? Sir Jack had open heart surgery in Los Angeles three weeks ago but plans to take his seat at a packed, emotional Villa Park.

The Wolverhampton Wanderers chairman, Jonathan Hayward, son of Sir Jack, concedes: "It doesn't seem ideal post-operative treatment, but I'm not sure anybody's brave enough to stop him."

Arsenal, of course, will not be sentimental. Tony Adams and co are back in the groove of grinding out doubles. They are in the semi-finals courtesy of just two victories in seven cup ties — beating Middlesbrough and Crystal Palace, but eliminating both Port Vale and West Ham United on penalty shoot-outs.

There is no Dennis Bergkamp, Lee Dixon or Ian Wright, and doubts about whether Marc Overmars's bruised ankle. So, for all the redoubtable rearguard that has not conceded a goal in eight consecutive FA Carling Premiership games, for all the fighting spirit in midfield, who will score the Gunners' customary goal? Nicolas Anelka is fast but excitable, Christopher Wreh has the knack of scoring when he looks least effective.

Wolves have their own uncertainties. Dean Richards and Keith Curle give soundness in defence in front of the rejuvenated Hans Segers. The midfield will have to make and mend in the absence of Simon Osborn (suspended) and Neil Emblen (cup-tied), not that they would have won the battle against Arsène Wenger's gifted, abrasive French duo, Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit.

Mark McGhee, the Wolves manager, swears that the Cup is a bonus, that the league is top priority. One doubts that argument would prove too persuasive amongst the 25,000 Wolverhampton faithful, or the recuperating Sir Jack. McGhee's little secret, if he knows it himself, is whether Steve Bull, an institution at Wolves for a dozen years and 300 goals, will get the chance to score one more and fulfil the dream of Wembley.

I suspect that Bull will be kept under wraps on the bench while Steve Claridge and Don Goodman try to feed on whatever their midfield can offer. McGhee's sudden leap into the transfer market suggests that even he now thinks his squad is a shade too ordinary to achieve Wolverhampton's own double target — promotion and the Cup. Crucially, perhaps, he lost for this week at any rate the one player he really wanted, striker David Connolly, whose move has been held up by Feyenoord.

McGhee somewhat wearily said after a goalless night at Queens Park Rangers in midweek: "Whatever combination of strikers we play, Arsenal won't worry that we will give Adams and Keown a problem. But, with their limited attacking options, they know we will make it difficult for them as well."

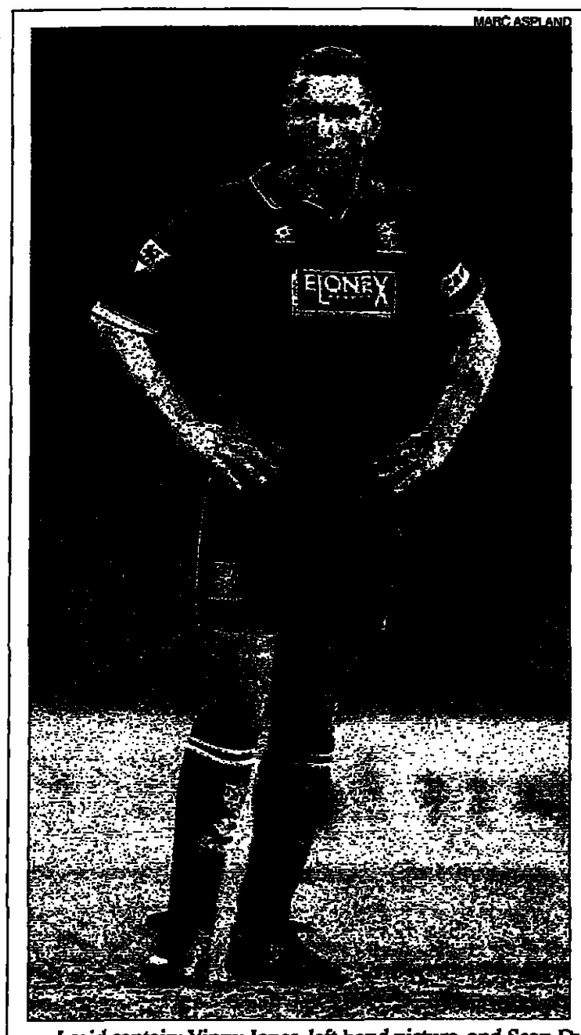
If it comes to a game of patience, then Wenger has grown accustomed to Arsenal's way of performance through perseverance. He came, we thought, to lend grace and style to Arsenal but his second season has surpassed the first with 89 yellow and seven red cards in all competitions so far.

Finally, this week, the Frenchman admitted it. "We are a physical team and we play to our strengths," he said. "I don't think we are an unfair team but every team against us is up for it, which means every game is a fight."

Little, then, to race the pulse, unless it is the referee's. Stephen Lodge has been the least busy Premiership referee in terms of yellow cards: that may change.

WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS (possible 3-5-2): H Segers — S Wright, D Richards, K Curle — A Williams, R Slater, S Sodgley, P Simpson, S Froggatt — S Claridge, D Goodman
ARSENAL (probable, 4-4-2): D Seaman — G Grimandi, M Keown, A Adams, N Winterburn — R Parlour, P Vieira, E Petit, S Hughes — N Anelka, C Wreh
Referee: S Lodge

■ TELEVISION: Tomorrow: Live on ITV from 11.30am.
■ PREDICTION: Warning to Sir Jack, be ready for a replay and then 1-0, but not necessarily to the Arsenal.



MARC ASPLAND



LAWRENCE GRIFFITHS

I said captain: Vinny Jones, left-hand picture, and Sean Dyche, left, were so close to walking out together at Wembley

FIRST 11 ELEVEN

LOOK AT WHAT YOU COULD HAVE WON

It is, so they say, the worst round in which to lose. The semi-final is so near and yet so far from glory. Here, for the benefit of fans who have missed out, are some fantasy FA Cup Finals based on what might have happened if only the semis had worked out differently

1. Chesterfield v Wimbledon. 1997
The Spireites v Crazy Gang — who said romance was dead?

2. Orient v West Brom. 1978
Just for once — a right old East End knees up that didn't involve West Ham

3. Norwich v Portsmouth. 1992
How would Ian Butterworth have coped with Guy Whittingham — we shall never know

4. Luton v Nottingham Forest. 1988
The 1959 rematch that everyone had been waiting for — without a member of Elton John's family in sight

5. Plymouth v Southampton. 1984
The whiff of cider on Wembley Way would have been overpowering

6. Birmingham v Stoke. 1972
It has glamour written all over it, doesn't it?

7. Crystal Palace v Derby. 1976
Malcolm Allison's fedora would have been added to the collection of "great managers' hats of the 70s"

8. Everton v West Brom. 1969
A repeat of the previous year's final — spooky

9. Burnley v Leicester. 1974
Peter Shilton could have worn that natty all white number he exhibited in the semi-final against Liverpool

10. Luton v Oldham. 1994
Who needs Man Utd against Chelsea anyway?

11. Birmingham v Ipswich. 1975
On second thoughts, anything would have been better than Fulham v West Ham

Compiled by Richard Whitehead

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP



Peter Robinson

Aston Villa had just turned over Everton 4-1 and John Gregory, the Villa manager, announced: "My chairman has just told me that our target now is to win the rest of our games this season and get into Europe." Chortles all round. "I think he was joking but you never know." Doug Ellis? Joke? Hardly likely, now, is it? Still, here goes, starting with the visit of West Ham United.

It is a good job that it is not a visit *to* West Ham, because they are very good at Upton Park, perhaps less so away from it. Injuries have reduced the squad to the bare bones of late, but they keep picking up good results and the return of Lomas and Lampard from suspension and Impey from injury will bolster them today.

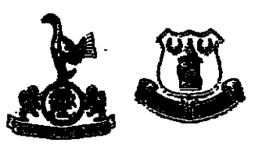
Villa should be unchanged. They may not be, for Milosevic is available, but they should be.

ASTON VILLA
v
WEST HAM UNITED
Today, 3.0 (sold out)

The victory at Goodison Park was one of their best of the season and the tiny, terrific partnership of Yorke and Joachim deserves another go.

ASTON VILLA (probable: 3-5-2): M Bosnich — U Ehiogu, G Southgate, S Staunton — G Charles, I Taylor, M Draper, L Hendrie, A Wright — J Joachim, D Yorke
WEST HAM UNITED (probable, 3-4-1-2): B Lama — I Pearce, R Ferdinand, D Unsworth — A Impey, S Lomas, F Lampard, S Lazaridis — E Berkovic — T Sinclair, J Hamson.
Referee: S Dunn

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, BBC1 10.20pm, brief highlights.
■ PREDICTION: Exciting draw.



TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
v
EVERTON
Today, 3.0 (sold out)



Rob Hughes

The FA Carling Premiership was formed for and by rich clubs such as Tottenham Hotspur and Everton. They meet today in fear that the vanquished might lose their place in that league, lose the £8 million that goes with it from TV income, and lose face among those who support them through thin and thin.

It brings out the desperation in managers. Howard Kendall, admitting that Everton heads dropped during the 4-1 home drubbing against Aston Villa last week, is prepared to risk the future of his talisman — centre forward Duncan Ferguson — for this one game.

Ferguson missed three matches through suspension, then damaged a ligament in his left knee but, though medical advice is to rest and though he has not trained, he wants to lead from the front. It is not just the 35 goals in 109 games the Scot has scored since coming south, but his "presence" that sways Kendall's judgment.

Christian Gross, the Tottenham coach, with more players returning to fitness than he knows what to do with, will change the team that won 3-1 at bottom-placed Crystal Palace last weekend because David Ginola is available again after suspension.

Central defenders Slaven Bilic and Carl Tiler are suspended for Everton, so Kendall must flank Craig Short with Dave Watson, 36, and teenagers Richard Dunne and Michael Ball.

With Unsworth and Hinchcliffe sold, who will clamp down on the wandering Ginola, not to mention Klinsmann and Armstrong? Kendall is expected to stiffen midfield with Gavin McCann, 20, playing his first full senior game.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (probable: 4-3-1-2): I Walker — S Carr, S Campbell, R Vega, C Wilson — N Berti, C Calderwood, M Sells — D Ginola — J Klinsmann, C Armstrong
EVERTON (possible, 3-5-2): T Myhre — D Watson, C Short, M Ball — J O'Kane, G McCann, D Hutchison, N Barmby, P Beagrie — D Ferguson, M Meder
Referee: A Wilkie

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, extended highlights.
■ PREDICTION: Spurs to lick the Toffees 3-1.



David Maddock

While neither side is totally insulated against the drop, it is still surprising to see these teams sauntering through the final third of the season. According to Ron Atkinson, the Sheffield Wednesday manager, the club "needed snookers" to survive when he took over from David Pleat. Atkinson has performed a marvellous job, and reckons two more victories will complete it.

In celebration, he has begun talks with Steve Staunton, his former defender at Aston Villa, who will become a free agent during the summer. Whether Atkinson will be around to manage him is another matter. He is tipped to move upstairs in the close-season.

Wednesday enjoyed a 3-2 victory at The Dell, but perennial strugglers Southampton are now one victory away from mid-table security, unheard of at this time of year. With the drive of Palmer and goals from all angles, they look a decent side. Palmer is suspended today, but Hirst will definitely play.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (probable, 4-4-2): K Pressman — E Barrett, D Walker, D Stefanovic, A Hinchcliffe — B Carbone, P Atherton, J Magilton, P Rudi — P di Canio, A Booth
SOUTHAMPTON (probable, 4-3-1-2): P Jones — J Dodd, K Monkou, R Dryden, J Beresford — D Hughes, K Richardson, M Oakley — M Le Tissier — E Oster stad, D Hirst.
Referee: P Jones

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, brief highlights
■ PREDICTION: Away win



SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY
v
SOUTHAMPTON
Today, 3.0



Richard Hobson

Subsequent events mean that the paucity of Leeds United's display at Upton Park on Monday night was put to one side. Next Wednesday, John Hackett, the pilot who saved the side from probable decimation when he crash-landed the burning aircraft at Stansted Airport, is guest of honour at the game against Chelsea.

George Graham, the manager, faces an unenviable situation. His sides rarely lose focus, but this time Leeds are trying to recover from something more serious than a 3-0 defeat against West Ham.

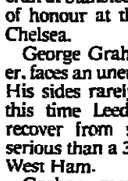
Graham may revert to 4-4-2 with Wallace returning to partner Hasselbaink. Kewell, too, is available again, but Radebe, the imposing central defender, completes a two-match ban.

Danny Wilson, the Barnsley manager, faces a difficult choice up front between Fjortoft, recovered from illness, and Hristov, who enjoyed his best game for the club at Ewood Park. De Zeeuw remains a doubt at the back.

LEEDS UNITED (possible: 4-4-2): N Martyn — A Mayburry, R Molenaar, M Hiden, G Halle — G Kelly, A I Haaland, L Bowyer, H Kewell — R Wallace, J F Hasselbaink.
BARNSLEY (possible, 3-5-2): D Watson — C Morgan, A Moses, S Jones — N Eaden, N Redfearn, J Bosancic, M Bullock, D Barnard — J A Fjortoft, A Ward
Referee: K Burge

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, extended highlights.
■ PREDICTION: Leeds win.

LEEDS UNITED
v
BARNSLEY
Today, 3.0



Nick Szczepanik

There may be few similarities between Martin O'Neill, the Leicester City manager, and Gordon Strachan, his Coventry City counterpart (except when it comes to discussing the merits or, more likely, the failings of referees), but both are agreed on one thing: avoiding relegation is still the No 1 target.

A home win today would give both clubs identical won-drawn-lost records, but Leicester will be without Neil Lennon, injured at Bolton Wanderers last weekend. Muzzy Izzet, if fit, is the likely replacement. Coventry could move centre-forward Dion Dublin back into defence and give Viorel Moldovan another chance to justify his £3.5 million transfer fee: but since Leicester's main threat is often the heading power of Steve Walsh and Matt Elliott at set pieces, which Dublin usually covers in any case, that looks unnecessarily risky for such a cautious man as Strachan.

LEICESTER CITY (probable, 3-5-2): K Keller — P Kaamark, M Elliot, S Walsh — R Savage, M Izzet, G Parker, T Zagorakis, S Guppy — A Cottee, E Heskey
COVENTRY CITY (possible, 4-4-2): S Ogrizovic — R Nilsson, G Breen, R Shaw, D Burrows — P Telfer, T E Soltvedt, G Boateng, N Whelan — D Huckerby, D Dublin
Referee: G Barber

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, brief highlights
■ PREDICTION: Both teams edge a point nearer safety.

LEICESTER CITY
v
COVENTRY CITY
Today, 3.0 (sold out)



Brian Glanville

Desperation on both sides could well turn this into the dour sort of game seen last Monday at Selhurst Park, when Wimbledon drew 0-0 with Newcastle United. The next day, Bolton Wanderers, who are indeed in dire straits, were perhaps a little unlucky to lose at home to Arsenal.

Wimbledon, however, cannot yet be sure of safety, nor can they take this game anything but very seriously. Dean Holdsworth, long a Wimbledon hero, could well be replaced in attack by John Salako, a player well-used to Selhurst Park and presently on loan from Coventry City but, in an earlier incarnation, a bright star of the Crystal Palace team on the left wing.

Wimbledon are unlikely to get back Ben Thatcher, their promising left back, who has torn a thigh muscle, but Alan Kimble is always a very able deputy.

WIMBLEDON (probable, 4-4-2): N Sullivan — K Cunningham, C Perry, D Blackwell, A Kimble — N Ardley, M Hughes, A Roberts, R Earle — M Gayle, C Leaburn.
BOLTON WANDERERS (probable: 4-4-2): K Branagan — A Todd, M Fish, G Bergsson, N Cox — F Frandsen, A Thompson, J Sheridan, J Phillips — R Taylor, J Salako
Referee: M Bodenham

■ TELEVISION: Today: *Match of the Day*, extended highlights.
■ PREDICTION: A draw.

WIMBLEDON
v
BOLTON WANDERERS
Today, 3.0



David Maddock

Suddenly, the victory over Middlesbrough looks important for Chelsea. Their woeful performance in Italy, and indifference in the league, makes Europe look a little distant. Thank goodness, then, for the automatic place offered by winning the Coca-Cola Cup.

If Gianluca Vialli has a problem, it is with his defence, where even the calmness of Leboeuf has been ruffled by the calamity all around him in recent weeks. Vialli must decide whether to continue alternating goalkeepers, but De Goey may now keep his place after a marvellous performance in Europe.

If a long, hard season is catching up on Chelsea, Derby County look positively shattered. They were beaten 5-0 by Leeds United in their last home game and, with Stimac suspended, also have defensive problems, although Laursen should return. Vialli may rest himself, allowing Hughes another chance after impressing at Wembley.

DERBY COUNTY (possible, 4-3-3): M Poom — G Rowett, J Laursen, C Daily, C Powell — L Carsley, S Eranio, J Hunt — P Wanchope, F Barano, D Sturridge
CHELSEA (probable, 4-4-2): E de Goey — S Clarke, F Leboeuf, M Duberry, G Le Saux — E Newton, D Wise, R di Matteo, D Petrescu — G Zola, M Hughes
Referee: J Winter

■ TELEVISION: Tomorrow: *Match of the Day*, BBC1 10.25pm, brief highlights.
■ PREDICTION: Subdued draw.

DERBY COUNTY
v
CHELSEA
Tomorrow, 3.0 (sold out)

ON MONDAY

Brilliant insights or hopeless guesses? Check our writers' predictions against their weekend match reports

هكذا من الأصل

FOOTBALL SATURDAY

Renaissance gathers momentum in Italy

Italian clubs could reach finals of all European cup competitions this season

BRIAN GLANVILLE



Calcio triumphant? Four Italian clubs are still in the running after the semi-final, first-leg matches in European cup competitions this week. In the European Cup, Juventus thrashed the AS Monaco team that had eliminated Manchester United, and seem certain to contest their third successive final.

In the Uefa Cup, Lazio deservedly won 1-0 at Atlético Madrid, who had eliminated Leicester City and Aston Villa. Internazionale beat Spartak Moscow in Milan with a very late goal, but merited their victory and could well make it an all-Italian final.

Vicenza, who have none of the resources nor aspirations of those three, beat a weary-looking Chelsea in the Cup Winners' Cup more easily than the 1-0 score suggests and, as Gianfranco Zola remarked, have a 50 per cent chance of survival at Stamford Bridge.

Have the Italians, then, got everything right? Have our leading clubs, by and large, read things wrongly? United, after all, failed to score against Monaco and missed Ryan Giggs. Juventus demolished the French team.

Arsenal, for the second year in succession, slipped out feebly in the first round of the Uefa Cup: impotent in Salonica, opaque on the return at Highbury. Yet there they are, breathing down United's neck in the FA Carling Premiership, and in line to repeat their FA Cup and league double of 1971.

However, the Italian achievements warrant closer scrutiny. Juventus, for example, were immensely lucky not to slip out of the Champions' League in its first phase. Only the fact that it had been planned like a madman's fly-trap saw them to squeeze through.

An 88th-minute equaliser by Olympiakos against Rosenborg meant that Rosenborg, in group D, had one point fewer than Juventus in group B. Juventus that night had beaten United, having lost to them at Old Trafford. Juventus went through as one of the two non-group winners with the best record.

Until then, it had seemed that Luciano Moggi, the club's formidable wheeler-dealer, nicknamed "The Nice Pinocchio" for his economies with the truth of transfers, had gambled once too often. Immediately after Juventus won the European Cup in 1996, they sold their strikers, Gianluca Vialli and Fabrizio Ravanelli. Their replacements, Alen Boksic and Christian Vieri, were transferred last year after Juventus had won Serie A and reached the European Cup final again.

At the beginning of this year Juventus signed the volatile young Holland player, Edgar Davids, from AC Milan, where he had been so disappointing. Davids, a player transformed, put power and drive into the midfield and Juventus took off.

As for Inter, Italian critics claim that they rely on the episodic brilliance of individuals, rather than playing as a coherent team. When one of those players is the phenomenal striker, Ronaldo, anything is possible. The Brazilian, though, did have a long, lean spell when he was publicly berated by Massimo Moratti, the club president. And Gigi Simoni, the manager who succeeded Roy Hodgson (now of Blackburn Rovers) last year was nearly sacked before this season.

Lazio also gambled in 1996, releasing Beppe Signori, the idol of their supporters. Last year, however, Sven Goran Eriksson, the Sampdoria manager who had pledged to join Blackburn, took over and brought with him another icon, Roberto Mancini.

Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, said last week that it was far easier to be a manager in England than in Italy, where the pressure was relentless; three defeats and out you went. Perhaps this pressure concentrates the mind wonderfully. Vialli, whose tactics in Vicenza were suspect, knows that in Italy he would never be allowed to step straight into management.

It is doubtful, too, whether any Italian club would tolerate Arsenal's self-destructive disciplinary record and Arsène Wenger, the manager, with his constant mitigation. Yet what of AC Milan? With Silvio Berlusconi's millions and Fabio Capello back as manager from Real Madrid, they stagger from one disaster to another. Not long ago, they bestrode Europe.

Che strano questo calcio. Funny game, football.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

(Last week's position in brackets)

	Played	Points	Goal diff	Home W	Home D	Home L	Home F	Home A	Away W	Away D	Away L	Away F	Away A	Last 10 matches W-D-L	Current streak
1. MANCHESTER UTD (1)	32	63	+37	12	2	2	37	7	7	4	5	23	16	4-2-4	W1
2. ARSENAL (2)	30	60	+23	11	2	2	30	9	6	7	2	19	17	8-2-0	W4
3. LIVERPOOL (3)	31	54	+20	10	2	4	31	15	5	7	3	23	19	3-5-2	W1
4. BLACKBURN ROVERS (6)	30	51	+12	10	3	2	37	19	4	6	5	14	20	3-2-5	W1
5. CHELSEA (4)	30	48	+24	9	2	3	28	12	6	1	9	31	23	3-0-7	L1
6. LEEDS UTD (5)	31	48	+12	7	3	5	22	15	7	3	6	23	18	4-1-5	L1
7. WEST HAM UTD (8)	30	47	+6	11	3	1	32	10	3	2	10	12	28	5-4-1	W2
8. DERBY COUNTY (7)	30	45	+4	10	3	2	28	13	3	3	9	16	27	4-1-5	L2
9. COVENTRY CITY (10)	30	43	+1	7	7	1	22	14	4	3	8	14	21	7-2-1	W1
10. SOUTHAMPTON (11)	31	43	-2	10	1	5	27	18	3	3	9	14	25	6-1-3	W1
11. ASTON VILLA (12)	32	42	-4	7	3	6	22	21	5	3	8	16	21	5-0-5	W2
12. LEICESTER CITY (9)	30	40	+3	5	7	3	16	11	5	3	7	19	21	3-4-3	L3
13. SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (13)	31	37	-13	8	4	4	27	22	2	3	10	18	36	4-2-4	L2
14. WIMBLEDON (14)	30	36	-4	5	4	7	16	19	4	5	5	14	15	3-2-5	D1
15. NEWCASTLE UTD (15)	31	36	-7	6	5	6	17	18	3	4	7	11	17	2-4-4	D1
16. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (17)	31	34	-16	6	5	4	18	19	3	2	11	14	29	4-2-4	W1
17. EVERTON (16)	31	33	-11	6	3	6	20	22	2	6	8	15	24	3-4-3	L1
18. BARNSLEY (18)	31	31	-39	6	3	6	22	29	3	1	12	10	42	4-1-5	L2
19. BOLTON WANDERERS (19)	31	30	-19	5	8	3	16	16	1	4	10	13	32	2-3-5	L1
20. CRYSTAL PALACE (20)	31	26	-27	0	4	10	8	29	6	4	7	19	25	1-0-9	L1

ATTACK

	Goals scored	Avge
1. Chelsea	59	1.97
2. Manchester Utd	60	1.87
3. Liverpool	54	1.74
4. Blackburn	51	1.70
5. Arsenal	49	1.63
6. West Ham	44	1.47
=. Derby	44	1.47
8. Leeds	45	1.45
=. Sheffield Wed	45	1.45
10. Southampton	41	1.32
11. Coventry	36	1.20
12. Aston Villa	38	1.19
13. Leicester	35	1.17
14. Everton	35	1.13
15. Wimbledon	30	1.00
16. Barnsley	32	1.03
=. Tottenham	32	1.03
18. Bolton	29	0.94
19. Newcastle	28	0.90
20. Crystal Palace	27	0.87

DEFENCE

	Goals conceded	Avge
1. Manchester Utd	23	0.72
2. Arsenal	26	0.87
3. Leeds	33	1.06
4. Leicester	32	1.07
5. Liverpool	34	1.10
6. Newcastle	35	1.13
7. Wimbledon	34	1.13
8. Chelsea	35	1.17
=. Coventry	35	1.17
10. West Ham	38	1.27
11. Blackburn	39	1.30
12. Aston Villa	42	1.31
13. Derby	40	1.33
14. Southampton	43	1.43
15. Everton	46	1.48
16 Bolton	48	1.55
=. Tottenham	48	1.55
18. Crystal Palace	54	1.74
19. Sheffield Wed.	58	1.87
20. Barnsley	71	2.29

SCORERS

Premiership only	Goals
Sutton (Blackburn)	16
Dublin (Coventry)	14
Gallacher (Blackburn)	14
Owen (Liverpool)	14
Bergkamp (Arsenal)	13
Hartson (West Ham)	13
Cole (Manchester Utd)	12
Baiano (Derby)	11
Di Canio (Sheffield Wed)	11
Huckerby (Coventry)	11
Wanchope (Derby)	11
Blake (Bolton)	10
Hasselbaink (Leeds)	10
Wallace (Leeds)	10
Wright (Arsenal)	10
Davies (Southampton)	9
Ferguson (Everton)	9
Flo (Chelsea)	9
Fowler (Liverpool)	9
McManaman (Liverpool)	9
Redfearn (Barnsley)	9
Vialli (Chelsea)	9

CAUTIONS

Cards issued	Yellow	Red
1. Everton	63	5
2. Leeds Utd	65	3
3. Arsenal*	61	3
4. C Palace	62	2
5. Derby	62	1
6. Bolton	57	5
7. Chelsea	59	3
8. Coventry	55	5
9. Sheffield Wed	51	3
=. Southampton	51	3
11. Barnsley	50	3
12. Manchester Utd*	53	0
13. West Ham	49	3
14. Blackburn	48	3
15. Newcastle	49	2
16. Tottenham	47	1
17. Liverpool	44	1
=. Wimbledon	44	1
19. Leicester	39	2
20. Aston Villa	40	1

* Caution downgraded/erased

REFEREES

Premiership games only	P	Yellow	Red
1. G Willard	17	79	7
2. M Reed	16	72	2
3. G Poll	17	68	7
4. J Winter	15	59	2
5. G Barber	17	66	3
6. U Rennie	17	67	3
7. D Elleray	16	57	4
8. P Durkin	16	56	3
9. S Dunn	13	45	2
10. A Wilkie	18	59	2
11. M Riley	16	49	2
12. N Barry	16	50	1
13. P Jones	17	52	2
14. M Bodenham	16	49	0
15. P Alcock	16	47	1
16. D Gallagher	15	42	2
17. K Burge	16	42	3
18. G Ashby	16	42	2
19. S Lodge	18	46	2

FA CUP SEMI-FINAL STATISTICS

THE semi-final stage of the FA Cup has run unaltered from its inception in 1872 to the present day.

Of the remaining teams in the competition, Arsenal have had the most visits to the semi-finals, making their 19th appearance, and have been the most successful with 12 wins. Newcastle United have the best average with a 85 per cent win record.

Sheffield United are the draw specialists, more than half of their first attempts have gone to replays. Arsenal also could lay claim to this title with the highest total of replayed matches, including their three replays in the semi-final of 1979-80.

Only Wolverhampton Wanderers and Arsenal have previously met in this round, in the 1978-9 semi-final, which Arsenal won 2-0.

PREVIOUS VISITS TO SEMI-FINAL

	No of visits	Ties won	Match drawn	Total replays
Arsenal	18	12	6	13
Newcastle	13	11	3	3
Sheff Utd	11	6	6	10
Wolves	13	8	4	5

LAST VISITS TO SEMI-FINAL

Arsenal: 1992-3 (1-0 v Tottenham).
Newcastle: 1973-4 (2-0 v Burnley).
Sheffield Utd: 1992-3 (1-2 v Sheffield Wed, aet).
Wolverhampton: 1980-1 (2-2, 0-3 v Tottenham).

CAUTIONS IN THE COMPETITION

	Yellow	Red
First round	188	12
Second round	82	7
Third round	121	4
Fourth round	79	5
Fifth round	39	2
Sixth round	26	2
Total	535	32

WOLVERHAMPTON v ARSENAL

Wolves' record v Arsenal	P	W	D	L	F	A
	9	2	1	6	9	12

Record at home: 3-0 (1975-6, 3r); 1-0 (1954-5, 4r); 1-2 (1937-8, 4r); 1-1 (1925-6, 3r)
Record away: 1-2 (1977-8, 4r); 1-2 (1963-4, 3r); 1-2 (1926-7, 6r); 0-1 (1925-6, 3rr)
Record at neutral ground: 0-2 (1978-9, semi-final)

SCORERS (previous rounds)
Wolverhampton: Paatelainen 4, Freedman 2, Curle, Naylor, Ferguson, Goodman, Richards, Robinson.
Arsenal: Bergkamp 3, Overmars, Parlour, Anelka 2.

CAUTIONS (previous rounds)
Wolverhampton: Booked: Curle 2, Muscat 2, Ferguson, Paatelainen, Goodman, Sedgley, Keane.
Arsenal: Sent Off: Bergkamp. **Booked:** Manninger, Platt, Keown, Bergkamp, Upson, Garde, Boa Morte, Hughes, Winterburn.

SHEFFIELD UTD v NEWCASTLE

Sheff Utd's record v Newcastle	P	W	D	L	F	A
	8	3	2	3	12	10

Record at home: 0-0 (1976-7, 3r); 0-2 (1946-7, 6r); 2-1 (1901-2, 3rr)
Record away: 1-3 (1976-7, 3rr); 3-1 (1960-1, 6r); 5-0 (1913-4, 1r); 1-1 (1901-2, 3r); 0-2 (1893-4, 1r)
Record at neutral ground: none

SCORERS (previous rounds)
Sheffield Utd: Saunders 2, Fjortoft 2, Hutchison, Sandford, Marcelo, Holdsworth.
Newcastle: Shearer 4, Rush, Ketsbaia, Speed, Batty.

CAUTIONS (previous rounds)
Sheffield Utd: Sent off: Short. **Booked:** Taylor 2, Hutchison, Sandford, Holdsworth, Stuart, Marker, Borbokis.
Newcastle: Booked: Pistone 3, Beresford 2, Lee, Peacock, Shearer 2, Batty, Pearce, Barton, Howey.

INTERNET

FA Premiership clubs' official websites

Arsenal	www.arsenal.co.uk
Aston Villa	www.astonvilla-fc.co.uk
Barnsley	www.yorkshire-web.co.uk/btc/BFC.HTML
Blackburn	www.rovers.co.uk
Bolton	www.boltonwfc.co.uk
Chelsea	www.chelseafc.co.uk
Coventry	www.ccfc.co.uk
C Palace	www.cpfc.co.uk
Derby	www.dcfc.co.uk
Everton	evertonfc.merseyworld.com
Leeds	www.lufc.co.uk
Leicester	www.lcfc.co.uk
Liverpool	—
Man Utd	www.sky.co.uk/sports/manu
Newcastle	www.newcastle-utd.co.uk/nufc
Sheffield Wed	www.swfc.co.uk
Southampton	www.soton.ac.uk/~saints
Tottenham	www.spurs.co.uk
West Ham	www.westhamunited.co.uk
Wimbledon	—
FA Premiership	www.fa-carling.com

WEEKEND MATCHES

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated * denotes all-ticket
Pools coupon numbers in brackets
In FA Cup and Premiership matches, † denotes sold out, otherwise seats available

TODAY

FA Carling Premiership
(-) † Aston Villa v West Ham
(-) Leeds v Barnsley
(-) *† Leicester v Coventry
(1) Sheffield Wednesday v Southampton
(2) † Tottenham v Everton
(-) Wimbledon v Bolton

Nationwide League
First division
(3) Bury v Huddersfield
(4) Manchester City v Stockport
(5) Norwich v Bradford
(6) Port Vale v Oxford Utd
(7) * Portsmouth v Birmingham
(8) Reading v Stoke
(9) Swindon v Charlton
(10) West Bromwich v Middlesbrough

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nottm Forest	40	24	8	8	70	38	80
* Sunderland	39	22	10	7	72	41	76
Middlesbrough	38	22	9	7	64	36	75
Charlton	39	20	9	10	71	49	69
Ipswich	39	18	13	8	64	38	67
Sheffield Utd	38	17	14	7	56	41	65
Birmingham	40	16	14	10	52	33	62
Wolverhampton	39	17	9	13	47	39	60
Stockport	40	16	7	17	61	56	55
Oxford Utd	40	15	8	17	55	52	53
Bradford	40	13	14	13	41	43	53
West Bromwich	40	14	11	15	39	46	53
Swindon	40	14	9	17	39	59	51
Crewe	40	15	5	20	46	57	50
Huddersfield	40	12	10	18	45	58	46
* Tranmere	38	12	10	16	43	46	46
QPR	41	10	15	16	45	56	45
Bury	40	9	18	13	37	48	45
Norwich	40	11	12	17	37	62	45
Port Vale	40	11	9	20	47	58	42
Portsmouth	39	11	8	20	41	55	41
Man City	40	10	10	20	43	48	40
Stoke	40	9	13	18	38	61	40
Reading	40	10	9	21	36	69	39

* not including last night's match

Second division
(11) Blackpool v Walsall
(12) Bournemouth v Wycombe
(13) Bristol City v Carlisle
(14) Fulham v Preston
(15) Grimsby v Gillingham
(16) Luton v York
(17) Millwall v Bristol Rovers
(18) Northampton v Burnley
(19) Oldham v Plymouth
(20) Wigan v Watford
(21) Wrexham v Brentford

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bristol City	40	23	9	8	64	33	78
Watford	40	21	14	5	59	35	77
Grimsby	39	18	12	9	52	31	66
Wrexham	40	17	13	10	48	44	64
Northampton	40	16	15	9	45	31	63
Fulham	39	17	9	13	48	36	60
Gillingham	40	17	9	14	48	45	60
Bristol Rovers	40	16	9	15	58	59	57
* Chesterfield	40	13	15	12	39	38	54
Bournemouth	39	14	11	14	50	47	53
Blackpool	39	14	9	16	49	57	51
York	40	12	15	13	47	51	51
Millwall	40	14	9	17	40	48	51
Oldham	39	12	14	13	52	47	50
Preston	40	13	11	16	47	48	50
Wycombe	40	12	14	14	47	51	50
Walsall	38	13	10	15	39	44	49
Wigan	38	12	9	17	51	58	45
Plymouth	40	11	12	17	49	60	45
Brentford	40	10	15	15	43	60	45
Luton	39	10	14	15	46	56	44
Carlisle	40	11	8	21	51	60	41
* Southend	40	11	8	21	45	70	41
Burnley	38	9	12	17	43	51	39

* not including last night's match

Third division
(22) Brighton v Scunthorpe
(23) Darlington v Barnet
(24) Doncaster v Hull
(25) Exeter v Chester
(26) Hartlepool v Cambridge Utd
(27) Leyton Orient v Mansfield
(28) Macclesfield v Lincoln
(29) Swansea v Shrewsbury
(30) Torquay v Rochdale

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
* Notts County	40	26	10	4	68	35	88
Torquay	40	20	9	11	61	49	69
Macclesfield	40	18	13	9	52	39	67
Barnet	40	18	12	10	55	41	66
* Scarborough	40	18	11	11	62	51	65
Lincoln	40	17	13	10	50	45	64
* Colchester	40	17	10	13	61	52	61
* Peterborough	40	16	12	12	59	44	60
* Rotherham	40	14	17	9	56	50	59
Leyton Orient	39	16	10	13	50	36	58
Scunthorpe	39	15	11	13	49	48	56
Mansfield	40	14	13	13	55	48	55
Exeter	40	13	15	12	59	53	54
Chester	40	15	9	16	52	49	54
Cambridge Utd	40	12	16	12	53	49	52
Hartlepool	40	11	19	10	52	45	52
Darlington	40	13	10	17	51	63	49
* Cardiff	40	9	22	9	46	41	49
Shrewsbury	40	12	12	16	52	57	48
Rochdale	40	14	5	21	45	49	47
Swansea	40	12	9	19	44	55	45
Hull	40	8	7	25	45	73	31
Brighton	40	5	14	21	29	56	29
Doncaster	40	3	7	30	27	105	16

* not including last night's matches

Vauxhall Conference
(39) Halifax v Woking
(—) Hednesford v Gateshead
(40) Leek v Yeovil
(—) Northwich v Hayes
(41) Stalybridge v Hereford
(—) Stevenage v Kidderminster
(—) Telford v Rushden and Diamonds
(42) Welling v Morecambe

Tennents Scottish Cup
Semi-final
(—) Falkirk v Hearts
(at Ibrox)

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division
(—) Aberdeen v St Johnstone
(—) Dundee Utd v Dunfermline

First division
(—) Airdrie v Dundee
(31) Raith v Greenock Morton
(32) St Mirren v Hamilton
(—) Stirling v Ayr

Second division
(33) Brechin v Stenhousemuir
(—) Inverness CT v Forfar
(34) Livingston v Clyde
(35) Stranraer v Clydebank

Third division
(—) Albion v Arbroath
(—) Alloa v Ross County
(36) Cowdenbeath v Berwick
(37) Dumbarton v East Stirling
(38) Montrose v Queen's Park

Dr Martens League
Premier division
(43) Bath v Atherstone
(44) Cambridge City v Dorchester
(45) Crawley v King's Lynn
(—) Gloucester v Burton Albion
(46) Hastings v Gresley
(47) Nuneaton v St Leonards
(48) Rothwell v Ashford
(49) Salisbury v Bromsgrove
(—) Sittingbourne v Halesowen
(—) Tamworth v Forest Green
(—) Worcester City v Merthyr

FA UMBRO TROPHY: Semi-final, second leg: Dover (1) v Cheltenham (2).

FAI HARP LAGER CUP: Semi-finals: Athlone v Cork (7.30). Finn Harps v Shelbourne (7 35)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: Erith and Belvedere v Bashley. Fareham v Trowbridge. Havant v Clevedon. Margate v Waterlooville. Newport IoW v Cirencester Town Weston-super-Mare v Baldock, Weymouth v Cinderford Witney v Tonbridge Angels. Yate v Fisher London Midland division: Bilston v Redditch. Blakenall v Bedworth. Brackley Town v Stourbridge. Ilkeston v RC Warwick. Moor Green v Sutton Coldfield Town. Raunds T v Evesham; Stafford v Hinckley Utd. VS Rugby v Shepshed D. Wisbech Town v Paget R

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Aylesbury v Dulwich; Basingstoke v Gravesend and Northfleet. Bishop's Stortford v St Albans (at Ware FC). Boreham Wood v Sutton United. Bromley v Chesham; Carshalton v Enfield. Harrow v Purfleet: Hendon v Dagenham and Redbridge. Hitchin v Heybridge. Kingstonian v Yeading. Walton and Hersham v Oxford City First division: Berkhamsted v Chertsey. Grays v Hampton. Leatherhead v Croydon. Maidenhead v Billericay. Molesey v Aldershot Town: Romford v Bognor Regis. Staines v Barton Rovers; Thame Utd v Whyteleafe: Wembley v Abingdon Town. Wokingham v Uxbridge. Worthing v Leyton Pennant Second division: Banstead v Tooting and Mitcham, Barking v Hungerford. Bedford T v Witham. Bracknell v Tilbury: Canvey Island v Marlow. Chalfont St Peter v Braintree. Cheshunt v Leighton Town: Metropolitan Police v Horsham. Wealdstone v Egham; Windsor and Eton v Northwood: Wivenhoe v Edgware. Third division. Corinthian-Casuals v Epsom and Ewell. Dorking v Ware; East Thurrock v Croydon, Flackwell Heath v Wingate and Finchley: Ford Utd v Tring. Harlow v Lewes. Hemel Hempstead v Clapton. Hertford v Aveley. Kingsbury v Camberley Town. Southall v Hornchurch.

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Altrincham v Spennymoor: Bamber Bridge v Radcliffe. Barrow v Runcorn: Bishop Auckland v Colwyn Bay. Emley v Alfreton, Gainsborough v Blyth Spartans. Guiseley v Winsford, Lancaster v Frickley; Leigh RMI v Hyde. Marine v Boston (4 15) First division: Buxton v Flixton. Eastwood Town v Stocksbridge PS. Gretna v Congleton. Lincoln United v Netherfield. Matlock Town v Farsley Celtic. Trafford v Great Harwood. Whitby v Albion. Whitley Bay v Belper Town. Workington v Harrogate Town. Worksop v Droylesden

LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth v Conwy (2.30), Bangor City v Newtown (2.0) Barry v Cemaes Bay (2 30). Caernarfon v Haverfordwest (2 30): Caersws v Connah's Quay (2 30). Carmarthen Town v TNS (2 30): Cwmbran v Porthmadog (2.0). Ebbw Vale v Rhyl (2 30). Inter Cable-Tel v Flint Town (2.0). Welshpool v Rhayader Town (2.30).

COMPLETE MUSIC HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: Almondsbury v North Leigh. Burnham v Banbury. Endsleigh v Bicester. Wantage v Kintbury

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Bedlington Terriers v South Shields. Crook v Seaham Red Star; Dunston Federation v Shildon: Guisborough v Consett: Jarrow Roofing v Durham; Morpeth v RTM Newcastle. Murton v Stockton; Penrith v Northallerton, Tow Law v Easington.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Beckenham v Slade Green, Chatham v Thamesmead; Cray v Erith. Crockenhill v Deal; Folkestone Invicta v Sheppey; Greenwich v Herne Bay: Lordswood v Tunbridge Wells: Swanley Furness v Hythe; VCD v Canterbury

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bridport v Calne; Chippenham v Chard; Keynsham v Bridgwater; Melksham v Elmore. Torrington v Odd Down; Westbury v Paulton R, Taunton v Brislington.

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division south: Barkingside v Hillingdon Boro, Beaconsfield v Waltham Abbey: Cockfosters v Hanwell. Haringey Boro v Brook House; St Margaretsbury v Harefield; Woodford v Amersham. Premier division north: Brache Sparta v London Colney; Hoddesdon v Royston. Langford v Potters Bar Town; Milton Keynes v Letchworth; Toddington v Arlesey Town. Welwyn Garden v Harpenden.

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Cambridge Utd v West Ham (11.0); Charlton v Norwich (11.0); Gillingham v Crystal Palace (11.0). Ipswich v Arsenal (11.0). Portsmouth v Tottenham (11.0): Southend v Queens Park Rangers (11.0). Watford v Fulham (11.0). Second division: Bristol City v Brentford (11.0). Colchester v Tottenham (11.0), Luton v Wimbledon (11.0). Reading v Wycombe (11.0); Swindon v Brighton (11.0).

ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Alvechurch v Meir KA, Cheslyn Hay v Wellesbourne; Coleshill v Studley BKL; Coventry Sphinx v Highgate, GPT (Coventry) v Bilston Community College; Handrahan Timbers v Kenilworth, Kings Heath v David Lloyd AFC; Massey Ferguson v Boldmere S, Southam v Continental Star; Worcester v Dudley Sports

OLD BOYS LEAGUE: Premier division: Latymer OB v Old Ignatians; Old Meadonians v Enfield OG; Old Tenisonians v Old Vaughanians Senior first division: Old Isleworthians v Phoenix OB; Old Salvatorians v Old Manorians, Old Wilsonians v Old Tiffinians, Old Buckwellians v Chertsey OS

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin v Cove; Deveronvale v Rothes: Keith v Nairn County; Lossiemouth v Buckie Thistle; Peterhead v Brora.

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Cobham v Feltham, Cranleigh v Westfield; Farnham v Chipstead. Hartley Wintney v Ashford; Netherne v Reading Town; Viking Sports v Merstham; Walton Casuals v Cove

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Burscough v Rossendale, Clitheroe v Atherton Collieries, Haslingden v St Helens. Holker Old Boys v Chadderton, Maine Road v Blackpool Rovers. Mossley v Darwen. Newcastle Town v Ramsbottom, Prescot Cables v Atherton LR, Salford v Warrington Cup: Semi-final, second leg: Vauxhall GM v Glossop North End

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Brentwood v Saffron Walden, Concord Rangers v Sawbridgeworth: Hullbridge Sports v Great Wakering: East Ham v Ilford; Stansted v Basildon U

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Bloxwich S v Stourport S, Brierley Hill T v Ettingshall; Darlaston v Cradley Town; Gornal A v Stafford T. Malvern T v Ludlow T; Tividale v Bustleholme; Westfields v Walsall Wood. Wolverhampton C v Wolverhampton.

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Clacton v Bury Town, Fakenham v Histon; Gorleston v Sudbury Tn Halstead v Ely. Harwich and Parkeston v Great Yarmouth; Lowestoft v Stowmarket: Soham v Tiptree. Sudbury W v Diss, Warboys v Felixstowe P and T: Watton v Newmarket; Wroxham v Woodbridge Town.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Lymington v AFC Newbury: Aerostructures v Gosport, BAT v Whitchurch Bemerton Heath v Thatcham Town, Cowes Sports v Bournemouth: East Cowes v Brockenhurst, Eastleigh v Downton Portsmouth v Romsey, Wimborne v Andover

TOMORROW

FA Cup
Semi-finals
*† Sheffield Utd v Newcastle
(at Old Trafford)
† Wolverhampton v Arsenal
(at Villa Park, 12.0)

FA Carling Premiership
† Derby v Chelsea

Nationwide League
First division
Nottingham Forest v Ipswich (12.05)

Tennents Scottish Cup
Semi-final
Rangers v Celtic
(at Celtic Park, 5.0)

Bell's Scottish League
Second division
Queen of South v East Fife

FA UMBRO TROPHY: Semi-final, second leg: Southport (1) v Slough (0)

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: Dartford v Fleet T.

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Sligo v St Patrick's Ath (3 15)

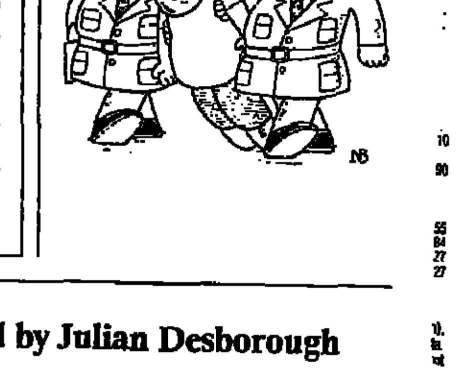
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Torrington v Melksham

FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Wembley v Arsenal (2.0). Berkhamsted v Croydon (2.0). Doncaster v Bradford (2.0). Millwall v Liverpool (2.0); Tranmere v Everton (2.0).

COVERAGE

TELEVISION: Today: BBC1: Football Focus, from 12.25pm. *Match of the Day* (Premiership highlights), from 10.20pm (repeated tomorrow at 8.30am) Sky Sports 1: Spanish League (live), from 7pm Tomorrow: BBC1: *Match of the Day* (FA Cup semi-final and Premiership highlights), from 10.25pm. ITV: FA Cup semi-final, Arsenal v Wolverhampton (live), from 11.30am. Channel 4: *Football Italia* (live coverage of Internazionale v Sampdoria), from 2.45pm; *Planet Football Live* (live coverage of Feyenoord v Rotterdam), from 4.55pm Sky Sports 1: Tennents Scottish Cup semi-final, Rangers v Celtic (live), from 5pm. Sky Sports 2: FA Cup semi-final, Newcastle v Sheffield United (live), from 2.30pm.

RADIO: Today: BBC Radio 5 Live: Live coverage of a Premiership match in *Sport on 5*, from 1pm. Tomorrow: BBC Radio 5 Live: Live coverage of both FA Cup matches in *Sunday Sport*, from 12pm.



Statistics compiled by Julian Desborough

National obsession with race that stays the course

RICHARD DUNWOODY



Like the FA Cup Final, the Martell Grand National is an institution not just in the sporting calendar but in British public life. When I walk into the paddock at Aintree this afternoon, in a procession of excited colleagues, we will feel the eyes of the nation — and beyond — upon us. Who knows which of our mounts might join the list of names that have made this the most famous race in the world?

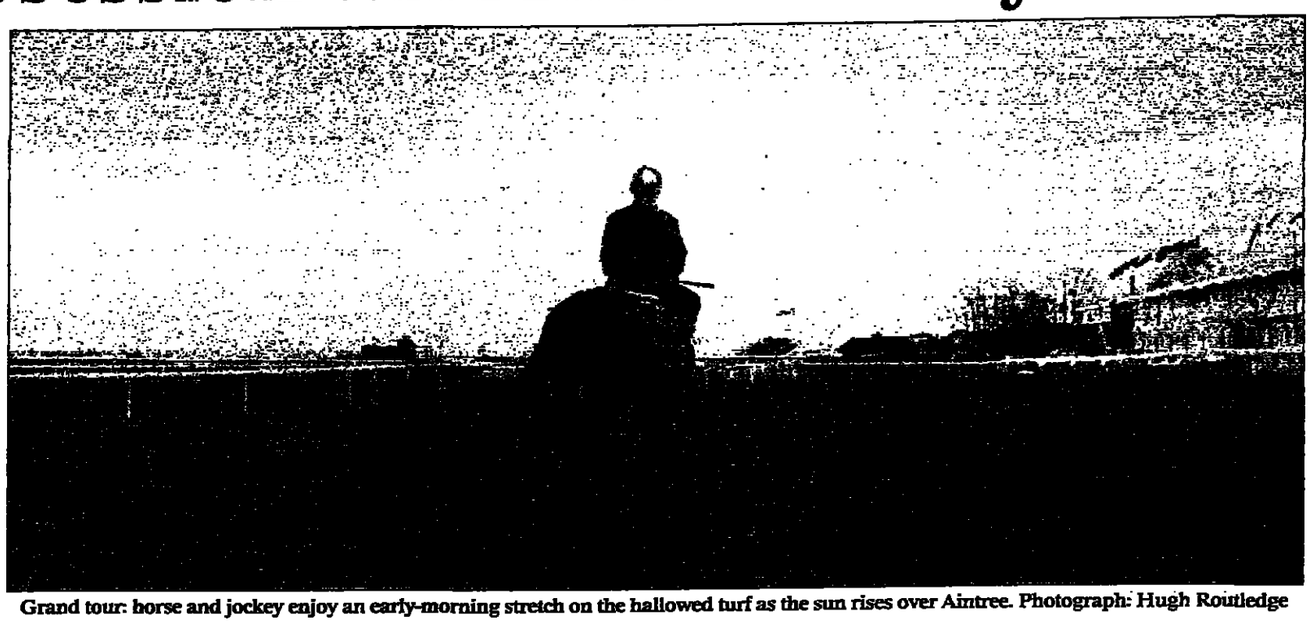
Names such as Foinavon and Devon Loch, synonymous with the role luck can play at Aintree; and others, such as Red Rum and Aldaniti, that will always stand for the role of heroes, on four legs or two.

Unhappily, there is no point pretending that horses and jockeys alone explain the race's grip on people who, as a rule, take little interest in our sport.

In recent years, the National has twice suffered trauma. In 1993, the starting tape wrapped around my neck as racing endured a day of severe embarrassment. The void race was not the fault of any one person, but it certainly taught a few lessons. By contrast, racing could be proud of the way it responded to a different crisis 12 months ago.

When we were told about the bomb scare, like everyone else I left all my things — including clothes and car keys — in the weighing-room. We were freezing, but tea and brandy were passed round and I was lucky enough to hitch a ride with Robert Alner, the trainer, as far as Runcorn, where we found a hotel. I borrowed some clothes from Chris Maude's brother-in-law, which were a rather loose fit.

Many jockeys ended up dancing the night away in Liverpool, still wearing their breeches and colours, and the sauna on Monday was crowded and high-spirited. It was a wonderful effort to stage the race then, sealing another remarkable chapter in the Aintree story.



Grand tour: horse and jockey enjoy an early-morning stretch on the hallowed turf as the sun rises over Aintree. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

My own Grand National story has been full of thrills and I am looking to Samlee today for a third success. I could not have asked for a better companion through my first five Nationals than West Tip. In 1985, we fell at Becher's second time round but we got it right the next year. He had so much you look for in a National horse — clever, lots of scope, stamina and a fine instinct for self-preservation.

It was hard to absorb at the time. I had barely ridden in point-to-points three years earlier, yet I had realised the dream of every jockey. In a sense, then, I could savour the experience rather more with Miinnehoma in 1994. The ground was testing and I knew there wouldn't be many finishers. In fact, I was wondering if we would be among them. But some horses, especially the less straightforward ones, really respond to the Aintree challenge.

You know by the time you get to The Chair whether or not they are taking to the place. Oddly, however, you cannot always be certain that they will have the same confidence if they go back. So I have to hope that Samlee will have fond memories of his last visit, when he won the Becher Chase in November.

I found him just a bit careful when I schooled him for the first time the other morning. But Philip Hobbs, his trainer, had moved his schooling fences and perhaps he was just having a look because he pinged them the next time. Samlee is tough and has plenty of stamina. I am looking forward to riding him, despite the fact that I have had a week of saunas and starvation to get down to my minimum weight, a couple of pounds over ten stone.

The horses I will be keeping an eye on include Rough Quest, favourite to repeat his win of two years ago. He has class and Terry Casey is a good trainer, while Earth Summit stays well and loves the mud.

If Aintree's big fences sum up the perils of my job, then likewise they provide the most vivid explanation as to why we do it. I am only riding Samlee because David Bridgwater has had to retire through injury — and David, not yet 30, was at the top of his profession a year or two ago.

Of course, I am hopeful of winning. But every jockey shares one higher ambition — that every horse and every rider gets back in one piece. And it would also be nice if, this time, it is only the glory of the race that makes the headlines.

STATISTICAL VIEW

Earth Summit set to scale record heights

By Jack Waterman

EARTH SUMMIT, winner of both the Scottish and Welsh equivalents, has a chance to make history in the Martell Grand National. No horse has previously won all three. Music Hall and Sergeant Murphy, in 1922 and 1923 respectively, were the first to succeed at Aintree after taking the Scottish National, which was then run at Bogside. Merryman II completed a similar double in 1960; then, after the move to Ayr, Red Rum in 1977 and Little Polveir in 1989 have been the only others to do so.

Even fewer are those who have captured first the Welsh National then the National itself — Rag Trade in 1976 and Corbiere in 1982-83. So it is up to Earth Summit, with the aid of Carl Llewellyn, the winning rider on Party Politics in 1992, and with a weight in the handicap proper, to go for the record.

JOCKEYS: Carl Llewellyn apart, there are two other previous winning jockeys. Mick Fitzgerald, aboard Rough Quest again, attempts to repeat their 1996 feat. Richard Dunwoody, with two victories, a second, a third and two fourths from 12 rides, has the best record.

TRAINERS: Both Jenny Pitman and Martin Pipe will today achieve the remarkable totals of 35 runners each in the big race since 1981. Pitman's yield has been two winners, a second and three thirds. Today she runs only Nahthen Lad, ninth last year and dropped in the weights. Martin Pipe, with one previous victory and a runner-up, makes his usual mass assault. Terry Casey and Josh Gifford are the remaining successful trainers.

PREVIOUS WINNERS: No horse since Red Rum has won the race more than once. From Rag Trade to Party Politics, no fewer than nine former winners have tried, but none succeeded although several have reached places. Rough Quest will be attempting to put the record straight this afternoon.

HANDICAP: The single most important factor in determining the winner. Only the few horses from Nahthen Lad upwards have a proper handicap mark. This bracket has provided 22 of the past 25 winners since 1972. All the rest of the field are carrying more weight than they should.

BETTING: Also since 1972, only two clear favourites and one joint-favourite have won. There have also been seven successful outsiders, but overwhelmingly the most likely winner, although not the first market choice, is one that is well backed. Fourteen winners started between 9-1 and 16-1 in the relevant period.

VERDICT: Earth Summit can win from Nahthen Lad and Rough Quest

COMPREHENSIVE FORM GUIDE

SUNY BAY 19l 5th of 17 to Cool Dawn in chase grade 1 at Cheltenham (3m 2f 110yd, good) with **Challenger Du Luc** (11lb better off) 24l 7th and **Rough Quest** (10lb better off) fell.

SCOTTON BANKS 44l 3rd of 6 to The Toiseach in handicap chase at Doncaster (3m 2f, soft).

GENERAL CRACK pulled up in chase at Wincanton (3m 1f 110yd, good to firm); previously a distance last of 3 to Evangelica in handicap chase at Newton Abbot (3m 2f 110yd, good to firm).

GO UNIVERSAL 23l 4th of 7 to Dublin Flyer in handicap chase at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good) with **Pashto** (levels) 24l 5th and **Challenger Du Luc** (4lb worse off) 31l 6th; previously handicap chase at Kempton (2m 4f 110yd, good to firm).

CIEL DE BRION 30l 6th of 19 to Bleu De Paques in hurdle at Enghien (2m 1f, good to soft); previously 31l 4th of 8 to Arfer Mole in handicap chase at Kempton (3m, soft).

CELTIC ABBEY pulled up in handicap chase at Sandown (3m 5l 110yd, good to soft) with **What A Hand** (2lb worse off) pulled up; previously 9l 4th of 6 to Banjo (5lb better off) in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 3f 110yd, good).

HIM OF PRAISE 7l 2nd of 15 to Dom Samourai in handicap chase grade 3 at Haydock (3m 4f 110yd, soft) with **Earth Summit** (7lb better off) beaten a distance 5th, **Nahthen Lad** (7lb better off) beaten a distance 6th, **Avro Anson** (7lb better off) pulled up, **Dun Belle** (5lb better off) pulled up, **Court Melody** (3lb better off) pulled up and **Into The Red** (levels) pulled up

INTO THE RED 33l 7th of 13 to Miss Orchestra in handicap chase grade 3 at Uttoxeter (4m 2f, good).

ST MELLION FAIRWAY a distance 8th of 13 to Unguided Missile in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f, good to soft) with **What A Hand** (2lb better off) a distance 9th and **Gimme Five** (2lb worse off) pulled up.

STORMTRACKER 3½l 2nd of 11 to Domaine De Pron in handicap chase at Newcastle (4m 1f, good) with **Samlee** (4lb better off) 13l 3rd, **Killeshin** (7lb worse off) 28l 7th, **Scotton Banks** (14lb better off) 44l 8th and **Choisty** (7lb worse off) fell.

POND HOUSE beat Rupples 5l in 6-runner handicap chase at Cartmel (2m 1f 110yd, good to firm); previously 43l 3rd of 5 to Brambleberry in handicap chase at Bangor (2m 4f 110yd, good).

BRAVE HIGHLANDER 10l 2nd of 6 to Sail By The Stars in handicap chase at Chepstow (3m 2f 110yd, soft) with **Killeshin** (levels) 40l 5th

HILLWALK pulled up in handicap chase at Market Rasen (4m 1f, heavy), previously pulled up in handicap chase at Kelso (3m 4f, good to soft).

JOE WHITE pulled up in handicap chase at Musselburgh (3m, good to firm); previously 21l last of 6 to The Last Fling in handicap chase at Wetherby (2m 4f, good to soft)

DO RIGHTLY 23l 4th of 9 to Flapjack Lad in handicap chase at Chepstow (3m, good) with **Maple Dancer** (10lb worse off) pulled up.

FABRICATOR 64l 15th of 17 to Edredon Bleu in handicap chase at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good); previously 16l 4th of 5 to Marble Man in handicap chase at Carlisle (2m, soft).

PASHTO 34l 4th of 11 to Eulogy in handicap chase at Sandown (3m, good to soft) with **Greenhill Tare Away** (11lb better off) pulled up.

RADICAL CHOICE 8l 2nd of 6 to Papensing in novice chase at Ayr (3m, good to soft); previously novice chase at Ayr (3m 1f, good to soft)

DAMAS pulled up in novice handicap hurdle at Taunton (2m 3f 110yd, good); previously beat Call Home 3l in 6-runner amateur handicap chase at Windsor (2m 5f, good).

CHOISTY beat Miss Diskin 1½l in 6-runner handicap chase at Warwick (3m 5f, soft).

GRIFFINS BAR 9¾l 5th of 11 to Samlee (levels) in handicap chase at Aintree (3m 3f, good to soft), previously handicap chase at Aintree (2m 6f, good).

WINTER BELLE 23l 6th of 14 to In Truth in amateur handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f, good to soft) with **Decyborg** (3lb worse off) 61l 9th and **Diwali Dancer** (3lb worse off) pulled up.



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GRAND NATIONAL RUNNERS, RIDERS, COLOURS AND ODDS

TEXT BY GEORGE RAE AND RICHARD AUSTEN

3.45 MARTELL GRAND NATIONAL

BBC1

(Handicap chase: £212,569: 4m 4f) (39 runners)

1	2-1145	SUNY BAY 16 (G,S) (Uplands Bloodstock) C Brooks 9-12-0	G Bradley	186
2	2-233F	ROUGH QUEST 16 (CD,G,S) (A Wates) T Casey 12-11-4	M A Fitzgerald	173
3	222F40	CHALLENGER DU LUC 16 (B,F,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 8-11-3	A P McCoy	168
4	46-P03	SCOTTON BANKS 28 (C,G,S) (I Bray) T Easterby 9-10-7	L Wyer	130
5	6-1360	BANJO 70 (C,F,G,S) (D Mercer) D Nicholson 8-10-7	R Johnson	166
6	/55165	EARTH SUMMIT 35 (B,G,S) (Summit Phrs Two) N Twiston-Davies 10-10-5	C Llewellyn	172
7	U65-3P	AVRO ANSON 8F (F,G) (Axom) Miss J A Camacho 10-10-3	DOUBTFUL	140
8	0-33P6	NAHTHEN LAD 35 (B,G,S) (J Shaw) Mrs J Pitman 9-10-3	R Farrant	179
9	-03U2P	DUN BELLE 35 (G,S) (Mrs A Connolly) P Fahy (Ire) 9-10-0	T P Treacy	166
10	11P-3P	GENERAL CRACK 37 (F,G,S) (Mrs S Lilley) P Nicholls 9-10-0	Mr J Tizzard	138
11	/F2P4-	GO UNIVERSAL 434 (C,F,G,S) (Universal Conference Ltd) N Chance 10-10-0	Mr S Durack	122
12	602440	CIEL DE BRION 31 (B,G,S) (H de Pracomtal) F Doumen (Fr) 8-10-0	T Doumen	165
13	23411P	COURT MELODY 35 (B,G,S) (M Coburn) P Nicholls 10-10-0	T J Murphy	163
14	U11-4P	CELTIC ABBEY 84 (F,G,S) (C & A Deuters) Miss V Williams 10-10-0	N Williamson	158
15	111132	HIM OF PRAISE 35 (G,S) (M St Quinton) O Sherwood 8-10-0	C F Swan	155
16	142-P0	INTO THE RED 14 (C,F,G,S) (J Huckle) Mrs M Reveley 14-10-0	D Gallagher	137
17	-22P40	WHAT A HAND 18 (G,S) (J McCarthy) P Nicholls 10-10-0	C Maude	144
18	35-560	ST MELLION FAIRWAY 18 (G,S) (St Mellion Estates Ltd) P R Webber 9-10-0	A Thornton	139
19	351133	SAMLEE 42 (BF,C,F,G,S) (White Lion Partnership) P Hobbs 9-10-0	R Dunwoody	156
20	/3003P	GIMME FIVE 18 (G,S) (J P McManus) E O'Grady (Ire) 11-10-0	K Whelan	143
21	/P0PRP	GREENHIL TARE AWAY 21 (F,G,S) (Salvo Giannini) P Hobbs 10-10-0	S McNeill	100
22	2-4422	STORMTRACKER 42 (F) (T Davis) C Weedon 9-10-0	DOUBTFUL	155
23	-1FP2P	YEOMAN WARRIOR 28 (G,S) (Mrs H Alwen) R Rowe 11-10-0	R Guest	149
24	1F-131	POND HOUSE 222 (C,F,G) (C Fleet) M Pipe 9-10-0	T Dascombe	130
25	4U1142	BRAVE HIGHLANDER 21 (G,S) (S Embiricos) J Gifford 10-10-0	P Hide	144
26	-U61PP	HILLWALK 99 (F,G,S) (M Shone) R Curtis 12-10-0	Mr R Wakley	143
27	24F6P-	JOE WHITE 463 (C,F,G,S) (Mrs E Rhodes) J Howard Johnson 12-10-0	Mr T McCarthy	133
28	111FP	DIWALI DANCER 18 (B,F,G,S) (B Case) M Pipe 8-10-0	R Thornton	133
29	54P505	KILLESHIN 21 (C,G,S) (H Manners) H Manners 12-10-0	S Curran	167
30	23/P24	DO RIGHTLY 11 (S) (M Fitzpatrick) M Bradstock 9-10-0	P Holley	150
31	/F6040	FABRICATOR 16 (S) (J Clements) Mrs A Naughton 12-10-0	J Supple	141
32	504-P4	PASHTO 21 (F,G,S) (R Tooth) N Henderson 11-10-0	J R Kavanagh	122
33	3/12U2	RADICAL CHOICE 21 (G) (G Charlton) J Charlton 9-10-0	B Storey	144
34	12131P	DAMAS 96 (B,F,G,S) (F G Wilson) M Pipe 7-10-0	J Evans	119
35	1U-2F1	CHOISTY 28 (G,S) (A Swinbank) H Haynes 8-10-0	R McGrath	143
36	P5U-5F	GRIFFINS BAR 2 (G) (M Smith) Mrs P Sly 10-10-0	G Tormey	133
37	2-5116	WINTER BELLE 18 (G,S) (Mrs M Bird) J Howard Johnson 10-10-0	Mr C Bonner	128
38	3-5PPP	MAPLE DANCER 11 (F,G,S) (Dr I Shenkin) D Williams 12-10-0	G Shenkin	74
39	122300	DECYBORG 18 (F,G) (T Neill) M Pipe 7-10-0	P Carberry	100

Long handicap: Dun Belle 9-12, General Crack 9-12, Go Universal 9-10, Ciel De Brion 9-10, Court Melody 9-10, Celtic Abbey 9-9, Him Of Praise 9-7, Into The Red 9-7, What A Hand 9-5, St Mellion Fairway 9-5, Samlee 9-4, Gimme Five 9-3, Greenhil Tare Away 9-1, Stormtracker 9-0, Yeoman Warrior 8-11, Pond House 8-9, Brave Highlander 8-8, Hillwalk 8-8, Joe White 8-8, Diwali Dancer 8-7, Killeshin 8-6, Do Rightly 8-6, Fabricator 8-4, Pashto 8-4, Radical Choice 8-0, Damas 8-0, Choisty 7-13, Griffins Bar 7-12, Winter Belle 7-10, Maple Dancer 7-10, Decyborg 7-10.

LAST YEAR: (run on Monday): LORD GYLLENE 9-10-0 A Dobbin (14-1) S Brookshaw 36 ran

1 3143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 B West 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F fell. P pulled up. U unseated rider. B brought down. S slipped up. R refused. D disqualified). Horses name. Days since last outing; F if flat. (B blinkers. V visor. H hood. E Eyeshield. C course winner. D distance winner. CD course and distance winner. BF beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F firm, good to firm, hard. G good. S soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating.

AVRO ANSON
Jockey: Peter Niven

Sixth in the race a year ago and comes here today with an unusual preparation — a run on the Flat at Doncaster last week. Julie Camacho attempts to become only the second woman to train a National winner, but this Avro Anson could be grounded by the soft going.

BANJO
Jockey: Richard Johnson

Leading player as a novice, but that was three years ago and he has run only six times since. Chances on his first two runs this season, including a win at Cheltenham, but must improve on his last two. In recent weeks the David Nicholson stable has been similarly muted.

BRAVE HIGHLANDER
Jockey: Philip Hide

Represents the same owner and trainer as 1983 winner Aldaniti, who, like this one, was returning from injury. Plenty of similarities, but enough to suggest another victory? Unlikely, though as Aldaniti proved, Aintree is the place for fairytales.

CELTIC ABBEY
Jockey: Norman Williamson

In fifth when unseating rider at The Chair as a 66-1 shot last year. Won his next two easily, but blotted his copybook with a failure to complete last time. Unproven on soft ground. His promising trainer was knocked unconscious when she took part in the National as a rider.

CHALLENGER DU LUC
Jockey: Tony McCoy

Character or downright rogue? One of the very best in the Martin Pipe yard, but has failed to win in seven starts this term, defying even the persuasive skills of champion jockey McCoy. No questioning his ability, the same cannot be said about his application.

CHOISTY
Jockey: Richard McGrath

Has won three of his seven starts over last two seasons, and fallen or unseated in the rest. Name hints at a cross between choice and tasty, but long odds suggest neither is particularly applicable to his prospects. Swindon farmer Ted Haynes seeks dream harvest

CIEL DE BRION
Jockey: Thierry Doumen

Both French-trained winners of the National came in the 1860s, but Francois Doumen has taken home several other of our big prizes. Fourth in the Hennessy showed he could have the class and stamina, and there are excuses for his two efforts since. No forlorn hope.

COURT MELODY
Jockey: Timmy Murphy

Much improved over last two seasons, and twice won in good style in February. A bad mistake at Haydock last time was a reminder of regular jumping errors earlier in his career, but he safely negotiated the Aintree fences when second to Samlee in November.

DAMAS
Jockey: Jamie Evans

Scored at Windsor in December, but in doing so made several jumping mistakes and hinted strongly at why his other nine starts this season have been over hurdles. All of those races have been at around 2½ miles, so moves up significantly in distance and class.

DECYBORG
Jockey: Paul Carberry

Official ratings make him the least talented runner in the field, a dubious honour he shares with Maple Dancer and Winter Belle. Consistent at the minor tracks, but found his entry at the Cheltenham Festival last time much too ambitious. Looks out of his depth again.

DIWALI DANCER
Jockey: Robert Thornton

Only made his steeplechasing debut in January. Has gained three victories in novice chases but more demanding assignments on his two latest starts have not offered much encouragement for today. A dancer unlikely to force his way out of the chorus.

DO RIGHTLY
Jockey: Paul Holley

His jockey has completed in three of his four Nationals and again looks to have found a safe enough conveyance. The closest that Holley has finished is eleventh, and though Do Rightly might not improve much on that, he is of some interest for a rank outsider.

DUN BELLE
Jockey: Tommy Treacy

The Irish have not won this race since 1975 and not been placed since Ebony Jane in 1994. Every chance on her second in the Irish Gold Cup but illness got the better of her at Haydock last time. Not without a chance, but has to put that last run behind her.

EARTH SUMMIT
Jockey: Carl Llewellyn

Already the winner of Scottish and Welsh Nationals, the latter a spectacular return to form in December. Two modest runs since, but at his best few can match his mix of class and stamina. Aintree press officer Nigel Payne is among his owners. Live prospects.

FABRICATOR
Jockey: John Supple

Has shown ability in previous seasons but not nearly so much this term. Recent career dogged by injury and was tailed off at Cheltenham after recent move from Ireland. Also, proven only at up to 2½m, so plenty to find to have any kind of chance.

GENERAL CRACK
Jockey: Joe Tizzard

Jumps soundly and should stay well, but those qualifications have looked academic so far this season given how badly he has been running. Needs a return to form, and quickly. Young amateur jockey Tizzard fell at the fourteenth on his first crack at the race last year.

GIMME FIVE
Jockey: Ken Whelan

Has some decent form in Ireland, but ran badly at Cheltenham last month. Confidence in him is further dented by the Irish champion jockey Charlie Swan's report that Gimme Five was slowly away that day, ballooned the first fence and lost interest thereafter.

	Coral	Ladbrokes	William Hill
Rough Quest	6-1	6-1	6-1
Suny Bay	6-1	8-1	7-1
Earth Summit	9-1	9-1	10-1
Him Of Praise	10-1	8-1	10-1
Samlee	10-1	9-1	11-1
Challenger du Luc	12-1	11-1	11-1
Nahthen Lad	14-1	16-1	16-1
Ciel de Brion	18-1	20-1	18-1
Banjo	20-1	20-1	20-1
Dun Belle	20-1	16-1	18-1
Stormtracker	-	-	-
Brave Highlander	25-1	25-1	22-1
Court Melody	25-1	28-1	25-1
Killeshin	25-1	33-1	33-1
St Mellion Fairway	33-1	28-1	33-1
Avro Anson	50-1	50-1	33-1
Gimme Five	40-1	33-1	33-1
Scotton Banks	40-1	25-1	28-1
Celtic Abbey	40-1	33-1	33-1
General Crack	50-1	50-1	50-1

	Coral	Ladbrokes	William Hill
Choisty	50-1	33-1	50-1
Diwali Dancer	66-1	150-1	150-1
Go Universal	66-1	100-1	66-1
Radical Choice	66-1	66-1	66-1
Winter Belle	66-1	100-1	66-1
Yeoman Warrior	66-1	100-1	66-1
What A Hand	80-1	66-1	66-1
Do Rightly	100-1	150-1	100-1
Hillwalk	100-1	200-1	150-1
Into The Red	100-1	100-1	66-1
Damas	150-1	200-1	150-1
Greenhil Tare Away	150-1	200-1	100-1
Joe White	150-1	150-1	100-1
Pashto	150-1	100-1	100-1
Pond House	150-1	150-1	100-1
Decyborg	200-1	100-1	250-1
Fabricator	200-1	250-1	200-1
Griffins Bar	250-1	200-1	150-1
Maple Dancer	500-1	500-1	500-1

PRICES MAY FLUCTUATE

GO UNIVERSAL
Jockey: Seamus Durack

First ride in the race for the top amateur rider of the season, and a first race this term for Go Universal. Previously trained by Charlie Brooks, for whom he was just touched off in the John Hughes over this course. Tall order on seasonal debut.

GREENHIL TARE AWAY
Jockey: Simon McNeill

Once looked a promising Grand National candidate, but that was two years ago and injury has intervened. Having pulled up three times, been tailed off once and refused once, he has almost nothing to recommend him in five starts this term.

GRIFFINS BAR
Jockey: Glen Tormey

Was also at huge odds here in November when he finished fifth. A blunder at the Canal Turn ended another surprisingly bold show in the 1997 John Hughes, a race he contests again this year, but he looks out of his depth even if Aintree does bring out the best in him.

HILLWALK
Jockey: Rupert Wakley

Successful twice last season and once this, his latest win coming in a small field at Cheltenham. Habit of jumping low does not inspire confidence in his prospects of getting round, something he has failed to do on his last two starts. An uphill struggle.

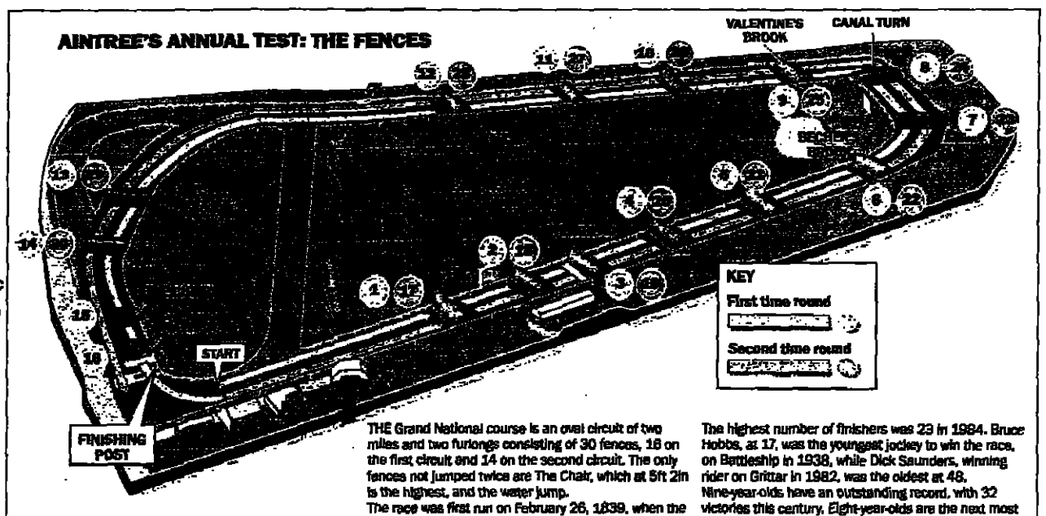
HIM OF PRAISE
Jockey: Charlie Swan

Thorough stayer, much improved this season when he completed a winning sequence of six. Has his quirks, though, and his tendency to run lazily means his jockey will earn his fee. Top Irish rider Charlie Swan has the pleasure. Hard work but could be rewarding.

INTO THE RED
Jockey: Dean Gallagher

Eleven-year-olds have a good recent record in the race and several 12-year-olds have obliged, but 14-year-olds are a bit long in the tooth. Has plenty of experience of the Aintree fences but into the red is the most likely destination of any investments in this quarter.

AINTREE'S ANNUAL TEST: THE FENCES



THE Grand National course is an oval circuit of two miles and two furlongs consisting of 30 fences, 16 on the first circuit and 14 on the second circuit. The only fences not jumped twice are The Chair, which at 5ft 2in is the highest, and the water jump.
The race was first run on February 26, 1839, when the winner was the aptly-named Lottery. His winning time was 14min 53sec, whereas Mr Frisk, the 1990 winner, triumphed in a record 8min 47.8sec.

The highest number of finishers was 23 in 1984. Bruce Hobbs, at 17, was the youngest jockey to win the race, on Battleship in 1938, while Dick Saunders, winning rider on Grittar in 1982, was the oldest at 48.
Nine-year-olds have an outstanding record, with 32 victories this century. Eight-year-olds are the next most successful age bracket, with 14 winners. Red Rum, successful in 1973, 1974 and 1977 is the only horse to have won three Grand Nationals.

JOE WHITE
Jockey: Tim McCarthy

The 1996 John Hughes winner over these fences. He unseated rider when returning to Aintree that November and broke down at Musselburgh the following month leaving him to overcome an absence of 463 days. All white on the night? Highly unlikely.

KILLESHIN
Jockey: Sean Curran

Seventh last year and a regular fixture in the other long-distance events, none of which seems nearly long enough for him. Without a win since February 1996, his best run this season was when working his way into fourth in the Welsh National in December.

MAPLE DANCER
Jockey: Gordon Shenkin

Ran four times at Stratford last season, winning three. Some uninspiring performances this term, and a failure to complete on his last three starts suggests his is an ambitious challenge, to say the least. Owner Ian Shenkin gives the leg up to his son.

NAHTHEN LAD
Jockey: Rod Farrant

Showed impressive form to win at Cheltenham two years ago but without a victory since. Has looked an awkward ride on occasions yet clearly has the ability to play a part if producing his best. Represents Jenny Pitman, whose National record demands the utmost respect.

PASHTO
Jockey: John Kavanagh

Without a win for two years and has offered little encouragement this term that he is about to end that drought, especially in a race as competitive as this. Likely to be prominent on the first circuit, less certain to be so involved second time around.

POND HOUSE
Jockey: Tom Dascombe

No Martin Pipe runner can be dismissed lightly, but the trainer will need all of his remarkable skills to coax a National victory from this one. Wins his share of races, although in much lesser company than he joins here. A house with little appeal as a desirable property.

RADICAL CHOICE
Jockey: Brian Storey

Out to give the Charlton family a day to remember. Trained by Alistair Charlton and owned by his son, George, he travels in hope more than expectation. Even Charlton snr fears lack of experience may count against him, so looks one for confirmed optimists only.

ROUGH QUEST
Jockey: Mick Fitzgerald

National winner two years ago under a supremely patient ride from Fitzgerald. Only two this century — Reynoldstown and Red Rum — have returned to win another National, but he remains a capable performer despite his mishap in the Gold Cup last time. Clear chance.

SAMLEE
Jockey: Richard Dunwoody

Already successful over the National fences this season in the Becher Chase, a major point in his favour. Stamina too is guaranteed, although a minus mark is a tendency to take time to warm up. Dunwoody seeks a third National after West Tip and Miinnehoma.

SCOTTON BANKS
Jockey: Lorcan Wyer

In the handicap proper, but would not be if he was rated only on his performances this year. A remote fourth over these obstacles in the Becher Chase in November 1996, and one requires an even longer memory to give him much of a chance today.

ST MELLION FAIRWAY
Jockey: Andrew Thornton

Capable of fair form but has been bunkered by three modest runs this term. Soft ground will help, although improvement will be needed to get involved at the business end. Thornton is enjoying a magnificent season, including a Cheltenham Gold Cup victory.

STORMTRACKER
Jockey: Doubtful runner

Stays, jumps and is in fine form, but the ground looks to have turned against him his best efforts are on going no softer than good. Second over another marathon trip in the Elder Chase at Newcastle last time showed what he can do with conditions in his favour.

SUNY BAY
Jockey: Graham Bradley

Second to Lord Gyllene last year on ground that would have been plenty fast enough. Going is more suitable this time but has paid for his efforts with a weight of 12 stone, a burden not carried successfully since Red Rum in 1974. Plenty of quality, jumps well, but that weight.

WHAT A HAND
Jockey: Chris Maude

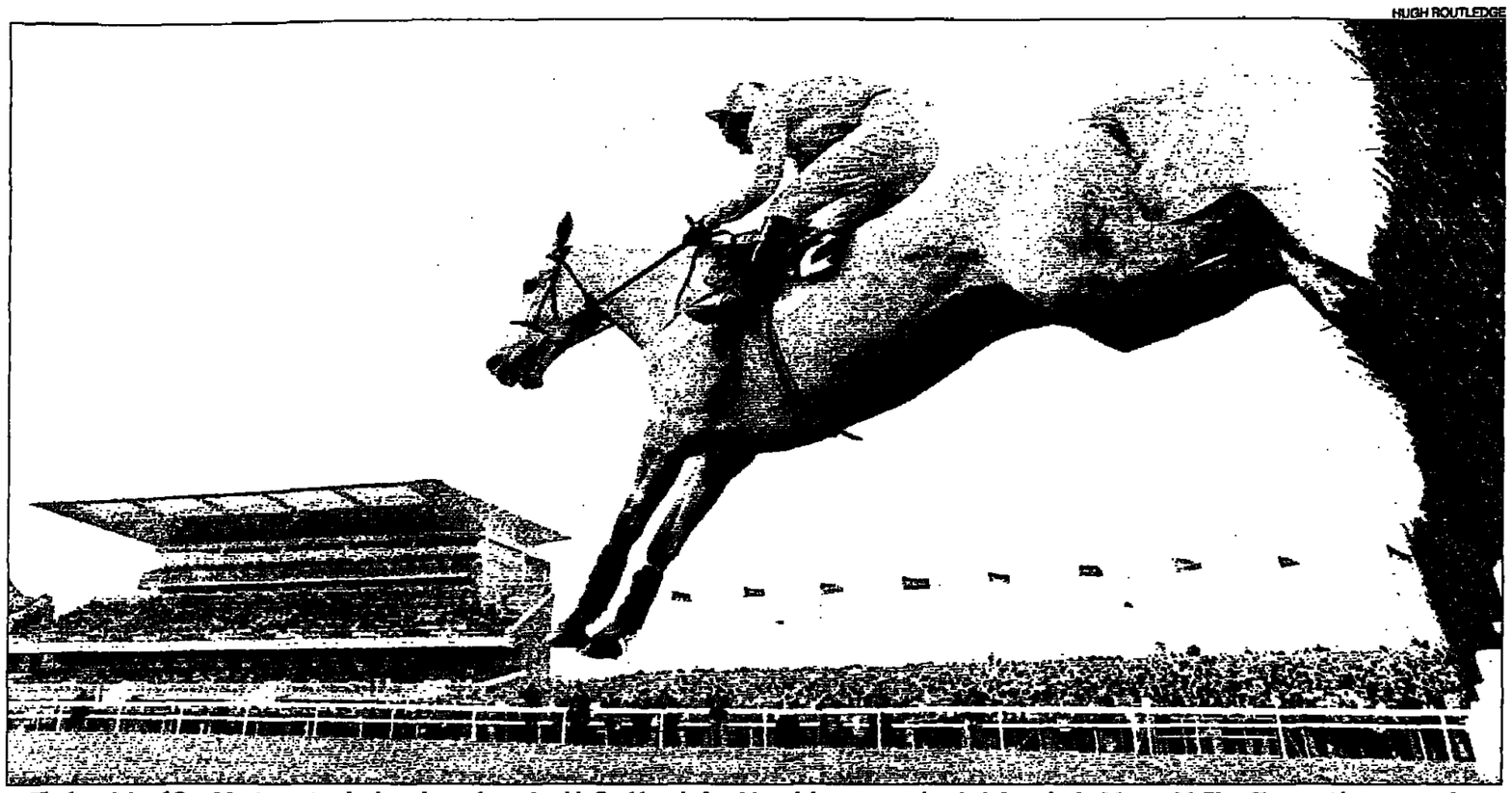
Useful hunter chaser last season but has failed to build on an encouraging start in handicaps this term. Form has steadily declined to leave him among the outsiders, and a swift revival is required to give any chance. Unlikely to take a hand in the finish.

WINTER BELLE
Jockey: Chris Bonner

Bonner has come third, fourth and fourteenth in his three National rides, all on outsiders. What might he achieve on a fancied horse? We will not find out with Winter Belle, whose two wins this season have been at a much lower level. Improbable belle of the National ball.

YEOMAN WARRIOR
Jockey: Richard Guest

Fine second over the National fences in the John Hughes Trophy at this meeting last year, which offers some encouragement, but record this season is littered with failures to complete the course. Has at least a win to his name, but at nothing like this level. Slim chance only.



HUGH ROUTLEDGE

The last sight of One Man's spectacular jumping as he makes his final leap before his sad departure at the ninth fence in the Mumm Melling Chase at Aintree yesterday

One Man killed in fall at Aintree

Chris McGrath pays tribute to a horse who captured the public imagination

TODAY, the world offers racing a stage. Dependable year after year, the Martell Grand National responds with the sport's most vivid drama. Inevitably, there is a mutual suspicion. Twelve months ago — having endured a crisis devised by the malevolence of others — the racing community could preen itself in its innocence.

After the death of One Man on the eve of the great steeplechase, however, it now suffers an aching crisis of conscience. Whether or not the outside world respects the reason, it certainly will not respect the grief. However enervated, however forlorn, racing must submit itself to its biggest audience, and entrust its reputation to the remarkable redemptive powers of the race itself.

For the time being, however, it will feel like a bishop arrested in the middle of his ordination. The measure of racing's guilt is the ardour of its love. For followers of the sport, One Man distilled the most potent flavours of National Hunt racing.

There was a communicable joy to the way he confronted the challenge that eventually killed him. The grey jumped and galloped with such brio. Gordon Richards, his heartbroken trainer, always savoured that buoyant athleticism, speaking of him as "a bouncing rubber ball".

And the physical freedom of One Man struck a chord with the people who watched him, with anyone who craved a corresponding liberation of spirit. There was nothing cramped or mean about him.

If destiny had reserved him a ghastly final twist, it always seemed to have touched One Man. There was always a sense that he had been born for greatness. He became an emblem, a burnished symbol. This was particularly so because he had been the bequest of his original trainer, Arthur Stephenson. Before his death, Stephenson had confided his faith in the young horse to his most cherished companion. When Richards brought One Man to Cumbria — John Hales spent 68,000 guineas for him at the Crawleas dispersal in 1993 — it was as though racing's baron of the northern hills had passed on his crown and sceptre.

But, in the course of his fulfilment with Richards, One Man also became a focus for unusually intense pride and prejudice. For there was an extraordinary intimacy between his talent and his fragility, as he showed with a dramatic loss of momentum whenever forced off the bridle at the end of a race.

In successive trips to Cheltenham, including when favourite for the Gold Cup, he suddenly faltered up the hill, stopping almost to a walk. When it happened at Kempton on Boxing Day, as he sought a third King George VI Chase, some people frankly concluded that One Man was a coward. Others wondered if he had some physical flaw, some brittleness, that emerged whenever he strained too hard. He was like the skin of a drum — booming and resonant when stretched tight, sadly limp when pierced.

For this reason, his success in the Queen Mother Champion Chase last month offers a most fitting final memory. If it now proves to have been tinged with an unwitting air of valediction, his return to the Cheltenham winner's enclosure that day was a moment of exultant vindication. By winning the two-mile championship, he showed his previous failures to have simply been due to lack of stamina. No horse could sustain that zest over three miles and more, certainly at hilly Cheltenham, even on the level playing field of Kempton when the ground was heavy.

His earlier valour over longer distances lends substance to comparisons with that other great grey, as vigorous and versatile, Desert Orchid. There is similar lustre to his formal record: One Man won 20 of his 35 races and £459,000 prize-money. But the true brotherhood between them is akin to that between Stephenson and Richards, a matter of heart and soul.

Bellator to make amends for Champion spill

AINTREE
BBC1

1.45: Theatreworld was a 12-length runner-up to Istabraq in the Champion Hurdle, but may struggle to give away weight to **Bellator**. Toby Balding's mudlover was staying on in the same Festival race and would have finished a good sixth but for unseating his rider at the last. Now in receipt of 20lb from the top weight and running on his favoured ground, he can gain his second course and distance success. Grimes does not like soft ground and Advocat always seems to find one too good.

2.20: Lord Dorcet ran the race of his life when third in the Queen Mother Champion Chase and is capable of reversing Victor Chandler Chase form with Jeffell. However, both may struggle to keep tabs on two novice chasers who are well treated in handicaps. Kadastrof beat Lake Kariba by 2½ lengths at Kempton over Christmas, but is 10lb worse off here. Both disappointed at Cheltenham, but **Lake Kariba** lost several lengths at the start and will be much better suited by this track and the soft ground.

2.55: **Istabraq** was the most impressive winner of the Champion Hurdle for years and should find this trip and going in his favour. The Aidan O'Brien-trained champion did not have an overly hard race when winning at the Festival and should follow up here. Collier Bay missed the Festival because of illness, but Jim Old's horses are in better fettle now and this mudlover looks the main danger.

3.45: see page 33

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: PUREVALUE
(4.35 Aintree)
NB: Ledgendry Line
(2.40 Hamilton Park)

RICHARD EVANS

HAMILTON PARK
CHANNEL 4

1.10: Soft ground is obviously an imponderable here. Inya Lake showed plenty of dash to make a successful debut in a seller at the Lincoln meeting and sets the standard after a long journey north. **Hadeqa**, however, may show sufficient benefit for his outing in the Brocklesby Stakes to beat her. Though visored there, he showed plenty of encouragement to finish with a flourish into fifth place. Tampa Lady has apparently shown ability, while True Love Ways and Oliberi also represent plausible yards for juvenile winners.

1.40: A discouraging early-season handicap. Mister Westsound has won twice over course and distance but is unlikely to be at his peak on this ground first time out, unlike Nifty Norman, for whom the booking of Kieren Fallon is obviously a great bonus. He may be better off at the minimum trip. The lightly-raced Arantxa won her maiden as a two-year-old in soft ground and has more room for improvement than most of these.

Pallium and Pierpoint need it faster but Mick Easterby's **Bee Health Boy**, who does act in the mud and went well fresh last year, starts the season on a very reasonable mark.

2.10: Lady Rachel comes from a stable in form, but she is not certain to relish racing beyond a mile for the first time. She does at least get all the concessions, and the older horses look sure to struggle on their very modest achievements to date. Touchez Du Bois could hardly ask for a softer introduction, but perhaps it is worth chancing the big question mark over the stamina of **All Made Up**. Though Michael Bell's filly is by Sheikh Albadou, she showed ability in a better class of race over a mile at two.

2.40: Ledgendry Line has improved over timber this winter and could be fairly treated on his return to the level. But softer ground today should suit **Dovedon Star**, who raced too keenly when third in a slowly-run race at Doncaster on her reappearance but kept on well to finish six lengths clear of the fourth. The champion jockey is booked for Totem Dancer, who finished strongly when placed in an apprentice handicap at the same meeting. Her in-form trainer reckons she will be better on this yielding ground, while Lord Advocate goes well at this course.

CHRIS MCGRATH

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

AINTREE

THUNDERER

1.45 Bellator
2.20 Lake Kariba
2.55 Istabraq
3.45 Nahthen Lad
4.35 **CALLING WILD (nap)**
5.15 Freelander

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.45 **SUNY BAY.**

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 ..... B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — stopped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing. F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating.

GOING: SOFT — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING — SIS

1.45 CORDON BLEU HANDICAP HURDLE
(£18,635: 2m 110yd) (5 runners) — BBC1

101	2506112	THEATREWORLD 10 (D,S) (Mrs J Magner) A P O'Brien (Ire) 6-12-0	C F Swan	158
102	021-100	GRIMES 18 (D,F,S,S) (J McManus) C Roche (Ire) 5-11-0	C O'Dwyer	146
103	1-0604U	BELLATOR 18 (CD,G) (P Richardson) G Balding 5-10-6	B Fenton	156
104	005522	ADVOCAT 16 (D,S) (High Street Syndicate) M Meade (Ire) 8-10-0	P Carberry	154
105	013102	CLASSIC EAGLE 15 (D,F,G) Mrs D Haine 5-10-0	Mr S Durack (5)	139

Long handicap: Advocat 9-13, Classic Eagle 9-0.

BETTING: 7-4 Theatreworld, 11-4 Grimes, Bellator, 4-1 Advocat, 33-1 Classic Eagle.

1997: SHANKAR 6-10-12 R Thornton (25-1) D Nicholson 18 ran

FORM FOCUS: Theatreworld 12l 3rd of 18 to Istabraq in hurdle grade 1 at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good to soft) with Grimes (14lb better off) 43l 14th and Bellator (20lb better off) unseated rider. Advocat 19l 3rd of 27 to Blowing Wind in handicap hurdle grade 3 at Cheltenham (2m 1f, good); previously 1½l 2nd of 8 to Impulsive Dream in handicap hurdle at Leopardstown (2m, soft). Classic Eagle 6l 2nd of 6 to Antiguan Flyer in handicap hurdle at Fakenham (3m, good), previously beaten a distance last of 9 to Lewticus in novice hurdle at Kelso (2m 2f, good).

THEATREWORLD ran a blinder at Cheltenham and takes a drop in class

2.20 MARTELL RED RUM CHASE
(Grade II: limited handicap: £25,510: 2m) (7 runners) — BBC1

201	21-P21U	JEFFELL 35 (D,G,S) (T Balley) A L Moore (Ire) 8-12-0	C O'Dwyer	161
202	24-2343	LORD DORCET 17 (D,F,G,S) (J Hogg) J Cranton 8-11-9	B Storey	158
203	1131210	KADASTROF 18 (BF,D,F,G,S) (A Paton) R Dickin 8-11-5	A Thornton	165
204	11101P3	CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE 16 (D,F,G,S) (Cumbrian Ltd) T Easterby 9-11-3	L Wyer	149
205	3261435	FLYING INSTRUCTOR 16 (D,F,G,S) (Lady Lyell) P Webber 8-10-13	J McCarthy	155
206	1-31040	INDIAN JOCKEY 16 (D,F,G,S) (S Mercer) M Pipe 6-10-11	A P McCoy	145
207	1112F10	LAKE KARIBA 16 (D,G,S) (P Barber) P Nicholls 7-10-9	T J Murphy	8716

BETTING: 3-1 Lord Dorcet, 4-1 Jeffell, 9-2 Kadastrof, 6-1 Cumbrian Challenge, Lake Kariba, 7-1 Flying Instructor, 8-1 Indian Jockey

1997: DOWN THE FELL 8-10-7 N Williamson (20-1) J Howard Johnson 10 ran

FORM FOCUS: Jeffell unseated rider at Naas (2m, good to soft); previously beat Celibate 15l 1 in 9-runner grade II handicap chase at Ascot (2m, soft) with Lord Dorcet (1lb better off) 13l 4th and Cumbrian Challenge (7lb better off) 19l 7th. Lord Dorcet 9l 3rd of 8 to One Man in grade I chase at Cheltenham (2m, good). Kadastrof 23l 10th of 16 to Champleve in grade I chase at Cheltenham (2m, good to soft) with Lake Kariba (10lb better off) 31l 14th

KADASTROF is smart on flat tracks and looks well treated

2.55 MARTELL AINTREE HURDLE
(Grade I: £50,050: 2m 4f) (6 runners) — BBC1

301	1/1P-32	COLLIER BAY 70 (BF,S) (W Sturt) J Old 8-11-7	M A Fitzgerald	145
302	1-11111	ISTABRAQ 18 (D,F,B,S) (J McManus) A P O'Brien (Ire) 6-11-7	C F Swan	167
303	-236125	KERAWI 18 (B,S) (M Archer) N Twiston-Davies 5-11-7	C Llewellyn	156
304	-111224	PRIDWELL 18 (D,F,G,S) (Jones, Berstock & Fleet) M Pipe 8-11-7	A P McCoy	165
305	-111340	SANMARTINO 18 (CD,F,G,S) (L Radcliffe) D Nicholson 6-11-7	R Johnson	159
306	13-2400	SHOOTING LIGHT 18 (V,G) (J Brown) P Murphy 5-11-7	T Dunwoody	149

BETTING: 4-11 Istabraq, 6-1 Pridwell, 8-1 Collier Bay, 16-1 Kerawi, 20-1 Sanmartino, 25-1 Shooting Light.

1997 BIMSEY 7-11-7 M A Fitzgerald (14-1) R Akehurst 7 ran

FORM FOCUS: Collier Bay 20l 2nd of 5 to Dato Star in hurdle grade 2 at Haydock (2m, soft); previously 1¾l 3rd of 8 to Relkeel in hurdle grade 2 at Cheltenham (2m 1f, good) with Shooting Light (4lb worse off) 99l 4th. Istabraq beat Theatreworld 12l in 18-runner hurdle grade 1 at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good to soft) with Pridwell (levels) 14l 4th, Kerawi (levels) 18l 5th, Shooting Light (levels) 20l 7th and Sanmartino (levels) 35l 12th.

ISTABRAQ cannot be opposed after his demolition job at Cheltenham

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Runs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
T Easterby	5	16	31.3	A P McCoy	12	37	32.4
D Nicholson	17	86	25.6	R Thornton	3	11	27.3
J Howard Johnson	6	24	25.0	P Carberry	6	23	26.1
Mrs M Reveley	4	25	16.0	R Johnson	6	26	23.1
M Pipe	14	89	15.7	S McNeill	3	17	17.6
N Twiston-Davies	9	62	14.5	C F Swan	4	24	16.7

3.45 MARTELL GRAND NATIONAL CHASE
(Handicap: £212,569: 4m 4f) (39 runners)

RUNNERS AND RIDERS — SEE PAGE 41

4.35 CHIVAS REGAL AMATEUR RIDERS NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
(£7,741: 2m 4f) (6 runners)

501	1111UF2	BLAIR CASTLE 181 (D,F,G) Miss L Russell 7-11-10	M Bradburne (5)	127
502	4-52011	FORESTAL 42 (G,S) (B Maguire) J Howard Johnson 6-11-5	C Bonner (3)	118
503	2222211	EIRESPRAY 23 (D,G,S) (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 7-11-5	R Walley (3)	131
504	/2-1115	CALLING WILD 16 (S,S) (Hunt & Coj P Nicholls 8-11-2	J Tizzard (5)	140
505	1-U2211	PUREVALUE 16 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs J Turpin) M W Easterby 7-10-5	S Durack (5)	133
506	/3P-3FP	AH SHUSH 42 (Mrs T Pritchard) Dr P Pritchard 10-10-5	Dr P Pritchard (7)	-

BETTING: 7-4 Purevalue, 11-4 Forestal, 4-1 Eirespray, 9-2 Calling Wild, 8-1 Blair Castle, 50-1 Ah Shush.

FORM FOCUS: Forestal beat Dr Bones 3l in 5-runner novice chase at Newcastle (2m 110yd, good). Eirespray beat Sniper 2½l in 6-runner novice chase at Carlisle (2m 4f 110yd, heavy). Calling Wild 22l 5th of 8 to Cyter Malta in chase at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good). Purevalue beat Centaur Express 18l in 7-runner novice chase at Hexham (2m 110yd, soft).

FORESTAL can continue his progress over fences

5.15 MARTELL N H FLAT RACE (£9,960: 2m) (17 runners)

601	111	THREE FRANKS 63 (D,G,S) (F Hasson) M Hammond 6-11-12	N Horrocks	-
602	521	COOLAW 46 (G) (Mrs R Calma) F Murphy 5-11-8	Mr S Durack	-
603	513-5	EASBY BLUE 17 (D,S) (C Orchard) S Kettlewell 6-11-8	Mr C Bonner	-
604	1	FREELANDER 21 (D,S) (J McManus) J J O'Neill 5-11-8	Mr R Walsh	-
605	316	KING'S ROAD 17 (D,S) (Mrs N Jones) N Twiston-Davies 5-11-8	M Keighley	-
606	3214	SIKANDER A AZAM 35 (D,S) (Lord Daresbury) C Grant 5-11-8	Mr D Costello	-
607	21-	SPUNKIE 389 (G) (J Short) R Johnson Houghton 5-11-8	X Aizpuru	-
608	110	INDIAN SPRING 17 (D,G,S) (J & J Richards) M Pipe 6-11-7	Mr G Elliott	-
609	33	BODFARI NORTH 12 (BF) (Bodfari Stud Ltd) M W Easterby 5-11-4	Mr K R O'Ryan	-
610	2	CROCADEE 30 (W Jenks) W Jenks 5-11-4	P Henley	-
611	3	ROSSMAR 23 (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 5-11-4	R Wilkinson	-
612	2	STAR OF DUNGANNON 52 (Mrs L Sewell) M Pipe 5-11-4	J Huet	-
613	32	WIRE DANCER WINS 12 (BF) (Mrs A Mellor) J J O'Neill 5-11-4	R McGrath	-
614	1	DRAGON LORD 45 (D,S) (P Savill) Lady Herries 4-11-2	DQUSTFUL	-
615	004	PURPLE LACE 37 (K Crabb) H Howe 5-10-13	DQUSTFUL	-
616	1	SAHARA REEM 29 (D,S) (J Norton) J Norton 4-10-11	B Grattan	-
617	2	MY TERN 21 (P Dutton, F Ford & D Stillwood) L Wells 4-10-7	L Cummins	-

BETTING: 5-1 King's Road, Indian Spring, 7-1 Star Of Dungannon, 8-1 Freelander, 10-1 others.

FORM FOCUS: Three Franks beat Castle Clear short head at Ayr (2m, good to soft). King's Road 15l 6th of 25 to Alexander Banquet at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good) with Indian Spring (4lb worse off) 25l 10th. Spunkie beat Certain Shot 6l at Fontwell (2m 2f, good). Crocadee 2½l 2nd of 13 to Bosuns Mate in national hunt flat race at Ludlow (2m, good).

THREE FRANKS is a tentative selection to continue his run

ADD TO THE EXCITEMENT WITH INSTANT FREEPHONE BETTING.



MARTELL GRAND NATIONAL
4½ miles Handicap Chase, Aintree 3.45pm, Live on BBC TV.

6/1 Rough Quest	33/1 Celtic Abbey	100/1 Joe White
7/1 Suny Bay	33/1 Gimme Five	100/1 Pashto
10/1 Earth Summit	33/1 Killeshin	100/1 Pond House
10/1 Him Of Praise	33/1 St. Mellion Fairway	150/1 Damas
11/1 Challenger Du Luc	50/1 Choisty	150/1 Diwali Dancer
11/1 Samlee	50/1 General Crack	150/1 Griffins Bar
16/1 Nahthen Lad	66/1 Go Universal	150/1 Hillwalk
18/1 Ciel De Brion	66/1 Into The Red	200/1 Fabricator
18/1 Dun Belle	66/1 Radical Choice	250/1 Decyborg
20/1 Banjo	66/1 What A Hand	500/1 Maple Dancer
22/1 Brave Highlander	66/1 Winter Belle	N/R Stormtracker
25/1 Court Melody	66/1 Yeoman Warrior	
28/1 Scotton Banks	100/1 Do Rightly	
33/1 Avro Anson	100/1 Greenhil Tare Away	

NR/R = Trainer states non-runner. Each-way: One quarter the odds a place 1, 2, 3, 4. Offers subject to fluctuation. Available up to 1 min. before Tattersalls Rule 4(c) may apply. Non-Runner = No Bet.

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WOLVERHAMPTON

THUNDERER

7.00 Courageous. 7.30 Mary Jane. 8.00 Drama King. 8.30 Failed To Hit. 9.00 Heathyards Shiekh. 9.30 Phoenix Princess.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 8.00 Glide Path. 8.30 **ANONYM** (nap). 9.00 Bin Faa.

GOING: STANDARD
DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE

7.00 QUICK DRAW MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-O: £3,525: 1m 4f) (4 runners)

1	43-	COURAGEOUS 156 P Cole 9-0	T Quinn 3	
2	660-	JONAS NIGHTENGALE 166 C Cyzer 9-0	J Weaver 2	
3		GD POSITIVE Mrs G Rees 8-9	R Lappin 1	
4	53-	KAMEEZ 149 M Johnston 8-9	D Holland 4	

10-11 Courageous, 7-4 Kameez, 5-1 Jonas Nightengale, 25-1 Gd Positive

7.30 SHERIFF CLAIMING STAKES
(£1,953: 5f) (6)

1	3154	FEATHERSTONE LANE 18 (CD,F) Miss L Siddall 7-9-8	Dean McKeown 3
2	4260	RAMSEY HOPE 32 (V,CD,F) C Fairhurst 5-9-8	C Lowther (3) 2
3	-630	LENNOX LEWIS 33 (B,D,F) D Nicholls 6-8-12	F Norton 1
4	5206	HEAVENLY ABSTONE 14 (V,D,F,S) P Evans 3-8-10	J F Egan 6
5	4002	YOUNG IBNR 7 (D,F) P Evans 3-8-9	A McCarthy (5) 5
6	0414	MARY JANE 45 (CD,F) J Berry 3-8-8	P Fessey (3) 4

9-4 Mary Jane, 3-1 Featherstone Lane, 7-2 Ramsey Hope, 13-2 Heavenly Abstone, 8-1 Lennox Lewis, Young Ibnr

8.00 LASSO HANDICAP
(£2,285: 2m 46yd) (11)

1	1324	TIME CAN TELL 42 (G) R Juckes 4-9-10	P Doe (5) 8	
2	0-07	HILLZAH 43 (C,D,F,G,S) R Bastiman 10-9-3	H Bastiman (5) 7	
3	00-2	BLATANT OUTBURST 14 (V) Miss S Wilton 8-9-2	S Wilkworth 9	
4	/00/	IMAD 22J (F,S) K Comerford 8-9-1	M Tebbutt 8	
5	6160	GLIDE PATH 15J (D,F,G) J Jenkins 9-8-12	C Lowther (3) 5	
6	560-	SHARP COMMAND 14J (C) P Eccles 5-8-9	D Holland 10	
7	5435	RAGAMUFFIN ROMEO 24 H Collingridge 9-8-8	R Mullen (5) 2	
8	0426	SIGNED AND SEALED 32 (B,D) C Cyzer 4-8-5	J Weaver 11	
9	210-	BRIDIE'S PRIDE 179 (S) G Ham 7-7-13	F Norton 4	
10	6005	KARADENI 18 R Hollinshead 4-7-13	A McCarthy (5) 1	
11	4022	DRAMA KING 19J (B,BF,G) B Llewellyn 6-7-10	J Quinn 3	

7-2 Drama King, 9-2 Blatant Outburst, 13-2 Signed And Sealed, 7-1 Time Can Tell, 8-1 Hillzah, Glide Path, Bridie's Pride, 10-1 others

8.30 WILD WEST HANDICAP
(£3,460: 1m 100yd) (6)

1	265-	SPACE RACE 225 (D,S) C Cyzer 4-10-0	D Holland 3	
2	6156	SUALTACH 18 (CD,F,S) R Hollinshead 5-9-10	A McCarthy (5) 4	
3	0-04	TERTIUM 8 (D,F) N Littmoden 6-9-9	A Whelan 2	
4	0413	FAILED TO HIT 7 (B,CD,F) N Littmoden 5-9-3	J Weaver 5	
5	2240	ANONYM 5 (B,CD,F,S) C Allen 6-9-2	N Carlisle 1	
6	5-00	NICKER 7 (H) M Wering 4-7-10	J Quinn 6	

9-4 Failed To Hit, 5-2 Tertium, 3-1 Space Race, 13-2 Sualtach, 7-1 Anonym, 33-1 Nicker

9.00 SIX GUN SELLING STAKES
(3-Y-O: £1,900: 1m 1f 79yd) (7)

1	1200	HEATHYARDS SHEIK 15 R Hollinshead 9-2	A McCarthy (5) 6	
2	0050	ALWAYS LUCKY 4 J Pearce 8-11	A Polli (5) 1	
3	4645	BIN FAA 43 (BF) Dr J Scargill 8-11	J Quinn 5	
4	60	GARAJ 12 J O'Shea 8-11	V Slattery 3	
5	50-0	PORCELLINO 40 K Burke 8-11	D Sweeney (7) 4	
6	0-00	DOUBLE APPEAL 15 (B) Mrs G Rees 8-6	A Mackay 2	
7		NATIONALVELVETGIRL R Guest 8-6	C Lowther (3) 7	

15-8 Heathyards Sheik, 3-1 Bin Faa, 4-1 Porcellino, 6-1 Nationalvelvetgirl, 7-1 Always Lucky, 20-1 Garaj, 25-1 Double Appeal

9.30 PALE RIDER HANDICAP
(£2,709: 6f) (10)

1	300-	YOUNG BRAVE 112 (C,D,F) D Chapman 4-10-0	P Fessey (3) 6	
2	40t2	TAKHLID 5 (CD,F,S) D Chapman 7-9-8	A Culhane 10	
3	00-4	PHOENIX PRINCESS 7 (D) Miss G Kelleway 4-9-5	J Weaver 2	
4	29-0	HEVER GOLF MOVER 63 (D,F,G) T Naughton 4-9-4	Rachael Moody (7) 8	
5	4432	LEIGH CROFTER 12 (B,C,D,F,G,S) J A Harris 9-9-3	T G McLaughlin 9	
6	00-1	MARENGO 12 (D) J Akehurst 4-9-1	A Clark 7	
7	1303	RUDE AWAKENING 18 (D,F) C Fairhurst 4-8-5	C Lowther (3) 4	
8	-000	SUPREME THOUGHT 33 (D,S) T Naughton 5-8-5	D Holland 3	
9	3066	LITTLE IBNR 54 (CD,F) P Evans 7-7-11	A McCarthy (5) 5	
10	0644	MARGARETROSE ANNA 7 B Baugh 6-7-10	D Wright 1	

7-2 Phoenix Princess, 4-1 Marengo, 5-1 Takhlid, Rude Awakening, 8-1 Leigh Crofter, 10-1 Hever Golf Mover, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M Johnston, 58 winners from 261 runners, 22.2%, P Eccles, 4 from 21, 19.0%; J Pearce, 14 from 78, 17.9%, R Guest, 10 from 57, 17.5%; J Berry, 46 from 310, 14.8%, R Bastiman, 6 from 41, 14.6%; Miss G Kelleway, 9 from 74, 12.2%

JOCKEYS: D Holland, 33 winners from 148 rides, 22.3%; J Weaver, 60 from 283, 21.2%; H Bastiman, 5 from 28, 17.9%, D Sweeney, 14 from 82, 17.1%, J Egan, 16 from 105, 15.2%, C Lowther, 12 from 83, 14.5%; T Quinn, 7 from 51, 13.7%, A McCarthy, 11 from 91, 12.1%

Blinkered first time

AINTREE: 2.55 Shooting Light. HEREFORD: 1.30 Sharazan, Tappelo. 4.20 Apache Park. 5.25 Cross The Rubicon

The Grand National.

With luck, we'll be seeing you twice today.

THE MARTELL GRAND NATIONAL
4m 4f. Handicap Chase. Aintree, 3.45pm. Live on BBC.

6/1	Rough Quest	66/1	Radical Choice
8/1	Him Of Praise	66/1	What A Hand
8/1	Suny Bay	100/1	Decyborg
9/1	Earth Summit	100/1	Go Universal
9/1	Samlee	100/1	Into The Red
11/1	Challenger Du Luc	100/1	Pashto
16/1	Dun Belle	100/1	Winter Belle
16/1	Nahthen Lad	100/1	Yeoman Warrior
20/1	Banjo	150/1	Diwali Dancer
20/1	Ciel De Brion	150/1	Do Rightly
25/1	Brave Highlander	150/1	Joe White
25/1	Scotton Banks	150/1	Pond House
28/1	Court Melody	200/1	Damas
28/1	St Mellion Fairway	200/1	Greenhil Tare Away
33/1	Celtic Abbey	200/1	Griffins Bar
33/1	Choisty	200/1	Hillwalk
33/1	Gimme Five	250/1	Fabricator
33/1	Killeshin	500/1	Maple Dancer
58/1	Avro Anson		*Stormtracker
50/1	General Crack		

*Trainer states non-runner

E/W one-quarter the odds a place 1,2,3,4.
In the event of any withdrawal(s) SP place terms and Tattersalls rule 4(c) may apply.
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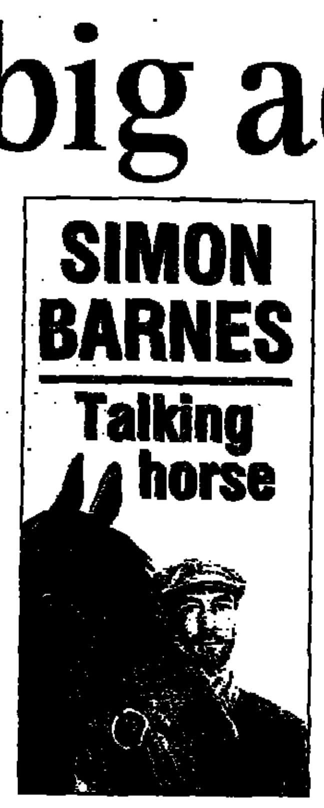
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TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

هكذا من الأصل

Second instalment of Sharp's big adventure

Twelve months ago, one stable lad stayed alone with the horses as the humans ran for cover. This time, he is hoping to maintain a lower profile



Oh, we British and our horses, eh? Every year at Grand National weekend, we are filled with a complacent delight in our own madness. And the rest of the world watches and wags its head in dismay. *Sont fous, ces Britanniques!*

No one is untouched by the madness. Even those remote from the event nod self-approvingly. Those that oppose the race still revel in being British archetypes: caring more for the poor horses than their owners. The British weep for what the French eat.

This is an annual weekend of horsey love. Love of hazard, love of spectacle, love of Britishness, for this race is British in a way that the Derby and the Cheltenham Gold Cup cannot begin to challenge. And love, of course: love of horses, whether you love the race or hate it.

Which brings us to bombs, and to Phil Sharp, the hero of Aintree. Sharp is an archetype of British life. He is like the man who paints the Forth Bridge. He is like Swampy: a person who fulfils a national need.

Sharp is The Lad Who Stayed Behind. As the coded warning came in at the Grand National last year, Aintree was evacuated, leaving behind the horses. And Phil, somehow overlooked, as stable lads tend to be. Staying behind, the boy on the burning deck, whence all but he had fled, seeing to the horses. 50 of them. Rather more than doing your two, as racing jargon has it.

Sharp looked after the burly and well-fancied grey, Suny Bay. He still does. Nothing has changed, after his brief 15 minutes, and doubtless nothing will change after its brief recapitulation this year. Nothing bar a few teases from his colleagues in a profession notoriously long on banter.

I met him briefly when I went to interview Suny Bay a few weeks ago. "Never knew there was a bloody bomb," Charlie Brooks, Suny Bay's trainer and Sharp's guv'nor, said. "What bomb, he said. Couldn't work out where all the other buggers had got to."

And Sharp smiled tolerantly enough, no doubt only the 500th time he had heard this joke. I don't really remember his face: my eyes were all for the horse. Which is the way of things for stable lads. And, well, Suny Bay was and is a terrific horse, carries top weight today, and Sharp will travel up with him and groom him until he gleams — not easy with a grey, that — and until his tail flows like a million strands of silk. And he will tack him up and walk him in hand till he turns him over the jockey, and the horse will look several million dollars and will turn every head on the racecourse and no one will notice Sharp at all.

Of course, Sharp is a wonderful symbol, a perfect imagination-catcher. He defied the terrorists, but he also defied the police. He defied both danger and the law, which adds a certain subversiveness to his heroics: a Robin Hood for horses.

And lest we think that the whole thing was blown out of all proportion, there was some real point to Sharp's defiance. There would have been injured and probably dead horses without him. The horses were abandoned in all their tack, according to police instructions. One horse had already rolled and got his legs hopelessly tangled in his reins. This is the time for a horse to panic and break a leg.

And panic spreads through a herd of horses at the speed of light, whether they are roaming wild on the plains or standing in a row of loose-boxes. Sharp untangled, calmed, patted, untacked the whole lot of them, made much of all of them, watered and hayed them.

"I don't think the police realised we were still there," Sharp said. "But it wouldn't have made any difference because I wouldn't have left the horses." His wife, Gail, said that when she heard there was one stable lad left behind, she had no doubts as to who it was.

Sharp is now 33 and has three children. The word "lad" does not mean boy. The job of stable lad now has a proper wage structure and their skills are recognised, if not recklessly overrewarded. It is a hard job, physically demanding and requiring the high skills of riding out two, sometimes three times a day.

And it has its riches all right, and the fierce, controlled gallops of work mornings are just part of them. The job is about involvement: the deep relationship that no person can avoid if he spends many hours of the day in the sole company of another sentient being.

For Suny Bay is Sharp's horse. Uplands Bloodstock may think that they own him. Brooks may think that, as trainer, he owns him. His jockey, Graham Bradley, certainly has an important relationship with him and so does Mel Gurdon, the equine physiotherapist who has worked so hard in Suny Bay's preparation.

But the only true owner is Sharp, who has no say in the horse's destiny. Suny Bay may be the favourite horse of Uplands Bloodstock, or Brooks, or Bradley. But Sharp is Suny Bay's human of choice: and that is glory enough to be going on with.

I know that you think me daft, the way I go on about horses and the relationships between horses and humans. I try to explain what it is like to be committed to a horse, or horses. I try to explain, knowing that I am describing colour to the blind.

'This is an annual weekend of horsey love. Love of hazard, love of spectacle, love of Britishness'

But those of us with horsiness in our blood know that Sharp's great adventure was, in a sense, no great shakes. Not that we would all have done it, all have stayed behind. We do not, any of us, know how we will act at any moment of truth.

But certainly, most of us would have *wanted* to stay: and practically all of us would have wished that we had done so. Not when we found out how it all turned out, but about 30 seconds after we had accepted the police instructions and discovered there was no way back.

Sharp himself said: "I can't believe all the fuss that was made. I found myself in a position where I was the only one who could look after the horses. Any one involved with racing would do the same."

And apart from changing the word "racing" to "horses", I agree with every word. Perhaps any horsey person would have done it: but the point is that Sharp actually did do it. Which means that, first of all, he stands for the horsey people of Britain, all us nutcases for whom a day without horses is a day without the sun.

But also, Sharp stands for all the vicariously horsey people of Britain, the legions who love from afar, those who love the Grand National and those who hate it.

Sharp stands for the grand and the national love of horses: soft-hearted, foolish, defiant of logic and common sense. Last year, on a weekend in which terror was avoided by a hair's breadth, we celebrated the daft, defiant love of a man for his horse and for horsekind.

Would you have stayed? That is the great, the several-million dollar question. But we would all have wanted to. Sharp stands for the bit in us all that wanted to stay. But he also stands for the bit in himself that actually did.



Sharp, The Lad Who Stayed Behind, kisses Suny Bay in his stable the day after the 1997 Grand National was postponed because of a bomb scare. Photograph: Paul Hackett

HAMILTON PARK

THUNDERER

1.10 Oliberi
1.40 Bee Health Boy
2.10 All Made Up
2.40 Ledgendry Line
3.05 Flashtalkin' Flood
3.35 Carouse

GOING. SOFT DRAW: 5F-6F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST SIS

1.10 CLYDESDALE BANK NOVICE STAKES C4
(2-Y-0. £3,404: 5f 4yd) (6 runners)

1	(1)	5	HADEQA 9 (V) (Men Behaving Badly) P Evans 8-12	J F Egan	[illegible]
2	(2)		OLIBERI (J Oliver) J Berry 8-12	K Darley	—
3	(3)	1	INYA LAKE 8 (D,G) (B Minty) M Channon 8-9	A Mackay	62
4	(4)		ISLE OF SODOR (Auldyn Stud Ltd) K Hogg 8-7	Dean McKeown	—
5	(5)		TAMPA LADY (R Fabrizius) M Johnston 8-7	M Roberts	—
6	(6)	0	TRUE LOVE WAYS 7 (Mascalls Stud) W G M Turner 8-7	A McCarthy (5)	48

BETTING: 9-4 Tampa Lady, 5-2 Oliberi, 7-2 Inya Lake, 9-2 Hadeqa, 14-1 Isle Of Sodor, True Love Ways.

1997: FILEY BRIGG 8-7 K Fallon (10-1) W Kemp 6 ran

FORM FOCUS Hadeqa 4½l 5th of 17 to Charlene Lacy in 2yo stakes at Doncaster (5f, good). Oliberi First Trump colt, half-brother to several winners on the flat and over hurdles. Inya Lake beat Angus The Bold 2½l in 11-runner 2yo maiden selling stakes at Doncaster (5f, good). Isle Of Sodor Cyrano de Bergerac filly out of 7f winner Costa Verde. Tampa Lady Up And At 'em filly, half-sister to four winning sprinters. True Love Ways 8¼l 9th of 22 to Rose's Treasure in 2yo maiden auction stakes at Doncaster (5f, good)

ISLE OF SODOR is bred to go a bit and could be worth chancing

1.40 CLYDESDALE BANK ASSET FINANCE HANDICAP C4
(£3,550: 6f 5yd) (13 runners)

1	(3)	101060-	NIFTY NORMAN 204 (G,S) (Mrs K Peebles) J Berry 4-9-10	K Fallon	69
2	(9)	01/0-5	ARANTXA 7 (D,S) (Mrs A Yearley) M Bell 4-9-9	M Fenton	55
3	(2)	134234-	PIERPOINT 178 (C,F) (R Fahey) R Fahey 3-9-2	D Egan (7)	54
4	(10)	005000-	BEE HEALTH BOY 171 (D,F,S) (Bee Health Ltd) M W Easterby 5-9-1	G Parkin	[illegible]
5	(12)	00003-0	BATALEUR 38 (CD,S) (M Worth) G Woodward 5-8-4	K Darley	66
6	(4)	120030-	MISTER WESTSOUND 158 (B,CD,F,G) (I Hay) Miss L Perratt 6-8-3	N Kennedy	59
7	(6)	250560-	PALLIUM 148 (B,C,F,G) (Mrs J McFadyen-Murray) D Nolan 10-8-2	K Sked (5)	50
8	(11)	060000-	BIFF-EM 173 (C,G) (Cree Lodge RC) Miss L Perratt 4-7-12	J McAuley (7)	66
9	(8)	00000-0	ANOTHER NIGHTMARE 33 (CD,F,G,S) R McKellar 6-7-11	Iona Wands (5)	58
10	(13)	6550-	HANBY 322 (P Manon) J Goldie 6-7-10	J Bramhill	49
11	(7)	000055-	BEST KEPT SECRET 204J (V,CD,F,G,S) D Nolan 7-7-10	A Mackay	45
12	(5)	000-000	CRAIGIE BOY 12 (B,CD,G,S) (B Rayner) N Bycroft 8-7-10	T Williams	50
13	(1)	015000-	RAGTIME COWGIRL 234 (C,F,G,S) D Nolan 5-7-10	R Winston (5)	56

Long handicap: Hanby 7-9, Best Kept Secret 7-8, Craigie Boy 7-6, Ragtime Cowgirl 6-11.

BETTING: 4-1 Nifty Norman, 5-1 Mister Westsound, 11-2 Bee Health Boy, 13-2 Pierpoint, 7-1 Arantxa, 10-1 Pallium, 12-1 Best Kept Secret, 14-1 others.

1997: FOIST 5-8-6 K Fallon (5-2 fav) M W Easterby 18 ran

FORM FOCUS Arantxa 3¼l 5th of 8 to Mr Frosty in handicap at Wolverhampton (7f, fibresand). Pierpoint 7¼l 4th of 15 to Special Treat in 2yo handicap at York (6f, good). Mister Westsound 7¼l 10th of 15 to Saint Express in handicap at Redcar (7f, good to firm). Pallium 5¾l 11th of 22 to Southern Dominion in handicap at Doncaster (5f, good). Best Kept Secret 4½l 5th of 8 to Palacegate Touch in claiming stakes at Haydock (6f, good to firm). Craigie Boy 14l last of 8 to Marengo in handicap at Southwell (6f, fibresand).

Fallon looks a significant booking for NIFTY NORMAN

2.10 CLYDESDALE BANK MAIDEN STAKES C4
(£3,404: 1m 3f 16yd) (7 runners)

1	(7)	/42500-	ONE LIFE TO LIVE 257 (R Fenwick-Gibson) D Barker 5-9-12	P Fredericks (7)	40
2	(3)	0400-0	THE VALE 5 (W Smith) R McKellar 6-9-12	K Darley	39
3	(5)		HAMILTON PRINCESS 53J (K Hogg) K Hogg 6-9-7	Dean McKeown	—
4	(1)	00440-3	SWEET NOTE 5 (T Finch) Miss L Perratt 4-9-7	J McAuley (7)	[illegible]
5	(6)	50-	ALL MADE UP 158 (N Abdullah) M Bell 3-8-6	M Fenton	58
6	(4)		TOUCHEZ DU BOIS (R Huggins) M Johnston 3-8-6	M Roberts	—
7	(2)	300-23	LADY RACHEL 12 (S MacDonald) J Eyre 3-8-1	T Williams	66

BETTING: 15-8 Touchez Du Bois, 9-4 All Made Up, 3-1 Lady Rachel, 8-1 Sweet Note, 14-1 Hamilton Princess, 25-1 One Life To Live, 33-1 The Vale.

1997: NO CORRESPONDING RACE

FORM FOCUS One Life To Live 33l 9th of 14 to Indigo Dawn in handicap at Southwell (1m 6f, Aw, fibresand). The Vale 29l 7th of 16 to Night City in handicap at Hamilton (1m 3f 16yd, heavy). Sweet Note 3½l 3rd of 9 to Zorba in stakes at Hamilton (1m 1f 36yd, heavy). Touchez Du Bois Cadeaux Genereux colt, closely related to several winners. Lady Rachel ¾l 3rd of 9 to Little Brave in 3yo maiden stakes at Southwell (1m, Aw, fibresand)

TOUCHEZ DU BOIS would not need to be out of the ordinary to win

2.40 CLYDESDALE BANK HANDICAP C4
(£6,775: 1m 5f 9yd) (7 runners)

1	(1)	33215-3	DOVEDON STAR 8 (S) (Oswaldo Pedroni) A Kelleway 4-9-12	J Weaver	[illegible]
2	(5)	0510-43	TOTEM DANCER 9 (C,G) (Diamond Racing Ltd) J Eyre 5-9-10	K Fallon	84
3	(2)	140643-	LEDGENDRY LINE 29J (BF,D,G) Mrs M Reveley 5-9-2	A Culhane	76
4	(6)	502230-	BACK ROW 149 (BF) (C Barber-Lomax) J Hetherton 4-8-9	N Kennedy	68
5	(3)	6004-13	THE BUTTERWICK KID 5 (C,G,S) (R Chambers) R Fahey 5-8-8	R Winston (5)	75
6	(7)	0/0030-	ROSSEL 45J (G) (A Melville) P Monteith 5-8-5	A McCarthy (5)	59
7	(4)	00200-0	LORD ADVOCATE 5 (B,CD,F,G,S) (Mrs J Murray) D Nolan 10-8-1	K Sked (5)	78

BETTING: 9-4 Dovedon Star, 7-2 Totem Dancer, 4-1 Ledgendry Line, The Butterwick Kid, 10-1 Back Row, Rossel, 25-1 Lord Advocate.

1997: SEA FREEDOM 6-9-6 S Drowne (5-1 fav) G Balding 18 ran

FORM FOCUS Dovedon Star 2l 3rd of 13 to Turnpole in handicap at Doncaster (2m 2f, good). Totem Dancer 2½l 3rd of 21 to Protocol in apprentice handicap at Doncaster (1m 4f, good). Ledgendry Line 12l 3rd of 9 to Wahiba Sands in handicap at Ayr (1m 5f 13yd, soft) with Lord Advocate (8lb better off) 32l 7th. The Butterwick Kid 2½l 3rd of 16 to Night City in handicap at Hamilton (1m 3f 16yd, heavy). Rossel 38l last of 7 to Golden Hadeer in handicap at Hamilton (1m 5f 9yd, soft). Lord Advocate 20l 7th of 11 to Tycoon Tina in handicap at Hamilton (1m 4f 17yd, heavy).

DOVEDON STAR drops in class and the ground will suit her

3.05 CLYDESDALE BANK EQUITY APPRENTICE SERIES HANDICAP
(£2,540: 1m 65yd) (9 runners)

1	(3)	351000-	FLASHTALKIN' FLOOD 45J (D,S) Mrs M Reveley 4-9-10	D Williams	72
2	(4)	1513354	ROCK ISLAND LINE 12 (CD,F,S) (J Berry) J Berry 4-8-8	P Bradley	68
3	(2)	134562-	STORMLESS 94J (CD,F,G,S) (D St Clair) J Goldie 7-9-7	S Rossamore (3)	[illegible]
4	(1)	606000-	WARNING REEF 232 (Valley Paddocks) E Alston 5-9-0	Melanie Worden (5)	65
5	(5)	360022-	GLEN OGIL 149 (W Hamson-Allan) M Channon 4-8-10	P Cleary (5)	73
6	(9)	34-0543	THE BARNSLEY BELLE 12 (K Meynell) J Eyre 5-8-7	S Buckley (3)	70
7	(6)	66-1250	PRINCIPAL BOY 10J (CD,G,S) (C Moreno) J Glover 5-8-6	P Fredericks	63
8	(8)	1-42110	LIVE PROJECT 18 (D,S) (Mrs G Quinn) R Craggs 6-8-3	J Bosley (3)	70
9	(7)	50000-4	HUTCHIES LADY 5 (CD,S) (Waygateshaw RC) R McKellar 6-7-10	J McAuley (3)	55

Long handicap: Hutchies Lady 7-5.

BETTING: 4-1 Stormless, The Barnsley Belle, 5-1 Glen Ogil, 6-1 Live Project, 7-1 Rock Island Line, Principal Boy, 10-1 Flashtalkin' Flood, Warning Reef, 14-1 Hutchies Lady.

1997: RAMBO WALTZER 5-9-9 Carolyn Bales (9-2 fav) D Nicholls 16 ran

FORM FOCUS Flashtalkin' Flood 41l 11th of 13 to Mazeed in handicap at Wolverhampton (1m 1f 79yd, Aw, fibresand). Rock Island Line 4¾l 4th of 8 to Alamein in claiming stakes at Southwell (7f, Aw, fibresand). Stormless 1l 2nd of 20 to Brambles Way in handicap at Newcastle (1m 2f 32yd, good to firm). Warning Reef 6¾l 9th of 10 to Clash Of Swords in maiden handicap at Catterick (1m 7f 177yd, good to firm). Glen Ogil 1¾l 2nd of 14 to Lunch Party in handicap at Musselburgh (1m, good to soft) with Principal Boy (9lb better off) 7¾l 7th. The Barnsley Belle 1¼l 3rd of 10 to Lucky Begonia in apprentice fillies handicap at Southwell (1m, Aw, fibresand). Principal Boy 13l 7th of 10 to Raased in handicap at Southwell (1m, Aw, fibresand). Live Project 9¼l 7th of 12 to Be Warned in handicap at Southwell (1m, Aw, fibresand). Hutchies Lady 13l 4th of 11 to Tycoon Tina in handicap at Hamilton (1m 4f 17yd, heavy).

STORMLESS ran a cracker at Newcastle last backend and is well handicapped

3.35 CLYDESDALE BANK RATING RELATED MAIDEN STAKES
(3-Y-0: £2,276: 1m 65yd) (6 runners)

1	(2)	50000-2	CAROUSE 4 (J Carey) M Channon 9-0	A Mackay	[illegible]
2	(6)	0060-	PRINCE NICHOLAS 259 (Auldyn Stud Ltd) K Hogg 9-0	L Charnock	48
3	(3)	000305-	TOM 149 (C Barber-Lomax) J Hetherton 9-0	N Kennedy	45
4	(1)	0060-	CELESTIAL WELCOME 151 (Welcome Alliance) Mrs M Reveley 8-11	A Culhane	54
5	(5)	004-5	HOLY SMOKE 24 (J Roberts (Wakefield)) J Eyre 8-11	K Fallon	56
6	(4)	000-	HOT TOPIC 127 (Oswaldo Pedroni) A Kelleway 8-11	K Darley	45

BETTING: 7-4 Carouse, 5-2 Holy Smoke, 11-2 Tom, 13-2 Hot Topic, 8-1 Celestial Welcome, 10-1 Prince Nicholas.

1997: PURCHASING POWER 9-0 S Drowne (7-4 jt fav) N Callaghan 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Carouse 5l 2nd of 17 to Blue Desert in 3yo selling stakes at Nottingham (1m 4yd, good to soft). Prince Nicholas 33l last of 11 to Abuhail in 2yo maiden stakes at Redcar (7f, good to firm). Tom 20l 5th of 8 to Ten Bob in 2yo maiden stakes at Musselburgh (1m, good to soft). Celestial Welcome 49l last of 27 to Bawsian in 2yo handicap at Redcar (1m, good). Holy Smoke 5¾l 5th of 9 to She's A Gem in 3yo handicap at Southwell (7f, Aw, fibresand). Hot Topic 19l 9th of 10 to Lift The Offer in 2yo novice stakes at Lingfield (7f, Aw, equitrack)

CAROUSE is worth a chance to confirm his Nottingham form

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
R Fahey	5	23	21.7	J Weaver	41	152	27.0
M Johnston	32	165	19.4	A Mackay	21	108	19.4
M W Easterby	4	23	17.4	N Kennedy	14	80	17.5
M Channon	8	53	15.1	K Fallon	20	125	16.0
Mrs M Reveley	17	117	14.5	K Darley	27	177	15.3
J Berry	30	210	14.3	T Williams	13	99	13.1
J Hetherton	4	29	13.8	K Sked	6	51	11.8

Pritchard aims to keep sight of Jukes

POINT-TO-POINT
BY CARL EVANS

JULIAN PRITCHARD has not given up hope of retaining his national riders' championship, but he is polishing his binoculars to keep sight of Jamie Jukes.

Five winners last weekend brought Jukes to 23 successes for the season, nine ahead of Pritchard who attempts to claw some ground back at the **United Pack** meeting today. Lets Twist Again, in the PPORA race, represents perhaps his best chance of a winner.

"I'm taking a back seat in the championship at the moment, but I'm ahead of last year's schedule and a good Easter could make all the difference," Pritchard said yesterday.

Jukes's plans were fluid yesterday, although he could ride Moving Out at the **Tedworth**, where Hall's Mill would be an interesting rival in the men's open.

Hall's Mill's trainer, John Porter, said: "He's also in the intermediate, but I'd switch to the open if it looked the easier race. His two recent wins have been in the fastest time of the day and I'd like to think of a hunter chase for him soon." Talented teenager Richie Forristal, who is based with Kim Bailey, will be in the saddle.

Porter has an additional role at today's meeting, carrying out a poll to discover why his colleagues are shunning the Tweseldown course in Hampshire. The **Thames Valley** meeting there tomorrow has few entries and Porter, a supporter of the course, is worried about its future.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: **Llangibby** at Howick, 2m W of Chepstow (first race 1.45); **Spooners & Dartmoor**, Cherrybrook, 2m N of Tavistock (1.00); **Tedworth**, Barbury Castle, 4m NW of Marlborough (1.30); **United Pack**, Brampton Bryan, 11m W of Hereford (1.30).

TOMORROW: **Cattistock**, Littlewindsor, 3m S of Crewkerne (2.00); **Cheshire Forest**, Tabley, 1m W of Knutsford (2.00); **Cleveland**, Stainton, 4m SW of Middlesborough (2.00); **East Essex**, Marks Tey, 5m W of Colchester (2.00); **Jedforest**, Friars Haugh, W of Kelso (2.00); **Ledbury**, Maisemore, 3m N of Gloucester (2.00); **Pytchley**, Guilsborough, 10m NW of Northampton (2.00); **Thames Valley**, Tweseldown, 3m W of Aldershot (2.30); **Tivyside**, Pantyderi, 6m W of Newcastle Emlyn (1.00); **West Kent**, Penshurst, 3m SW of town (1.30). TUESDAY: **Heythrop**, Heythrop, 2m E of Chipping Norton (2.00).

HEREFORD

THUNDERER

1.30 Tappeto. 2.00 Wilde Music. 2.35 Absolute Folly. 3.10 Anythingyoulike. 4.20 Dovetto. 4.55 Late Encounter. 5.25 Quiet Moments.

Carl Evans: 4.55 Swordella.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT SIS

1.30 KILPECK HURDLE (£2,642: 2m 1f) (16)

1	2203	BEEFY NOVA 24 N Twiston-Davies 6-11-5	J Goldstein (7)
2	-00F	COMMANCHE CUP 11 A James 5-11-5	Gary Lyons
3		EATON DOVE A E Price 5-11-5	D Burrows (5)
4	40-	GENERAL MONTY 236F A Johnson 6-11-5	S Mitchell (3)
5	0034	KATATONIC 52F R Juckes 5-11-5	Guy Lewis (3)
6	00	MASTER LORIEN 72 T George 6-11-5	Mr O McPhail (5)
7	00P	NATURAL PARK 19 G McCourt 5-11-5	D J Moffatt
8	0	SHARAZAN 11 (B) O O'Neill 5-11-5	V Slattery
9	2452	SOL MUSIC 23 (BF) J King 6-11-5	W Marston
10	34	TAPPETO 11 (B) P R Webber 6-11-5	B Powell
11	P-0	TIGER BRIGHT 52 T Wall 9-11-5	J Mogford (7)
12		DI'S DREAM J Bradley 6-11-0	A Bates (5)
13	0	GIVE ME SPACE 50 T Forster 5-11-0	L Aspell (3)
14	64P5	KNOWING 30 (S) P Watkins 11-11-0	S Kelly (7)
15	64	MISS LAMBRINI 24 D McCain 5-11-0	S Wynne
16	0-0F	RAMILLION 47 I Brown 6-11-0	Mr A Brown

5-2 Tappeto, 3-1 Beefy Nova, 4-1 Sol Music, 6-1 Miss Lambrini, 10-1 others.

2.00 JAIL NOVICES CHASE (£2,944: 2m 3f) (5)

1	6012	CENTAUR EXPRESS 16 (G,S) A Streeter 6-11-6	T Eley
2	25-1	WILDE MUSIC 149 (F,S) C Brooks 8-11-6	M Berry (5)
3	P/PF	GOLDEN FILM 7 B Llewellyn 10-11-0	S Wynne
4	/P0P	PERFIK LARK 56 R Brotherton 8-11-0	M Griffiths (7)
5	0/2	STRATUS 23 R Alner 8-11-0	B Powell

4-6 Wilde Music, 2-1 Centaur Express, 12-1 Stratus, Golden Film, Perfik Lark.

2.35 BREDWARDINE HURDLE (£1,698: 2m) (16)

1	-5RR	MAGICAL BLUES 21 (CD,F,G) A Johnson 6-11-12	M Gingell
2	P204	RACING HAWK 19 (G) P Bowen 6-11-6	W Marston
3	U5P2	ABSOLUTE FOLLY 7 Mrs S Smith 6-11-0	D Elsworth (7)
4	/56-	BACKVIEW 407F B Llewellyn 6-11-0	Mr J L Llewellyn
5	0020	BARLEY MEADOW 72 J O'Shea 6-11-0	Michael Brennan (3)
6		CERBERA 373F J Smith 9-11-0	W Worthington
7	3P6-	DORMSTON BOYO 481 T Wall 8-11-0	J Mogford (7)
8	/0-P	DUNNICKS WELL 142 F Tucker 9-11-0	S Burrough
9	5003	GRATE BRITISH 19 J Allen 6-11-0	Gary Lyons
10	/B/F	MACS HERO 28 C Smith 8-11-0	M Ranger
11	4-PP	BEL-DE-MOOR 72 D Wintle 6-10-9	R Bellamy
12	0	JENTAR EQUILIBRA 11 R J Price 6-10-9	B Powell
13		LITTLE FLIMS M Sheppard 5-10-9	L Harvey
14	-P0P	POT BLACKBIRD 52 R Brotherton 9-10-9	M Griffiths (7)
15	00	SUBAROO SAM 14 J Bradley 4-10-6	S Wynne
16	F0	HUSTLE AN BUSTLE 39 G Fierro 4-10-3	Mr O McPhail (5)

3-1 Absolute Folly, 7-2 Grate British, Racing Hawk, Magical Blues, 9-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: C Mann, 3 winners from 10 runners, 30.0%; N Twiston-Davies, 24 from 98, 24.5%; O O'Neill, 3 from 13, 23.1%

JOCKEYS: D J Burchell, 5 winners from 44 rides, 11.4%; S Wynne, 6 from 54, 11.1%; R Massey, 4 from 40, 10.0%.

3.10 HEREFORDSHIRE HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,217: 3m 2f) (7)

1	4251	SCOTBY 26 (S) R Buckler 8-11-10	B Powell
2	PP/1	DEBT OF HONOR 32 (B,CD,F,G) R Lee 10-11-6	L Harvey
3	4433	TEXAN BABY 23 (G,S) N Twiston-Davies 9-11-3	J Goldstein (7)
4	3-10	ANYTHINGYOULIKE 17 (S) M Sheppard 9-10-13	W Marston
5	-P02	HARDY WEATHER 17 (G) D Gandolfo 9-10-7	S Wynne
6	4P06	ALASKAN HEIR 35 (V,G,S) A Streeter 7-10-0	Gary Lyons
7	4566	STAGE PLAYER 17 (F,G,S) C Carne 12-10-0	M Naughton (5)

9-4 Scotby, 3-1 Debt Of Honor, 7-2 Texan Baby, 9-2 Hardy Weather, 10-1 others.

4.20 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP HURDLE
(£3,048: 2m 1f) (15)

1	4312	ALBEMINE 43F (D,F,G) R Juckes 9-11-11	Guy Lewis (3)
2	3P-P	CHEF COMEDIEN 19 (S) M Wilkinson 8-11-11	I Lawrence
3	-322	EUROLINK THE LAD 17 (F,G) D Burchell 11-11-6	D J Burchell
4	1104	KEY GRIP 84 (S) Mrs S Smith 7-11-2	B F Ryan (5)
5	2450	APACHE PARK 19 (V,G,S) A Streeter 5-10-12	T Eley
6	0024	AINSI SOIT IL 21 (B,D,G,S) G McCourt 7-10-12	W Marston
7	302/	ASKING 276F (D,F) M Bradstock 6-10-9	R Studholme (5)
8	-255	WINTER ROSE 17 (S) Miss P Whittle 7-10-8	K Hibbert (7)
9	415	LIMELIGHT 21 (D,F) P Murphy 4-10-4	L Aspell (3)
10	216/	BRIGHT NOVEMBER 714 (BF,C,F) D Gandolfo 7-10-0	S Wynne
11	1024	DOVETTO 24 (S) A E Price 9-10-0	D Burrows (5)
12	42-4	CELESTIAL FIRE 11 (D,F) O O'Neill 6-10-0	V Slattery
13	0001	RAMBO TANGO 22 (D,S) B Cambidge 4-10-0	Gary Lyons
14	40P3	SIR PAGEANT 28 (G,S) A Bridgwater 9-10-0	M Griffiths (7)
15	P-P0	WOLDSMAN 10 N Twiston-Davies 8-10-0	J Goldstein (7)

5-1 Key Grip, Dovetto, 6-1 Eurolink The Lad, 8-1 Ainsi Soit Il, 10-1 others.

4.55 GARWAY NOVICES HUNTERS CHASE
(£1,095: 2m) (14)

1	0504	ANNS DISPLAY 14P (S) N Wilson 7-12-0	Mr N Wilson (5)
2	-033	DALAMETRE 25 (BF,G,S) M Evans 11-12-0	Mr M Harris (7)
3	P131	LATE ENCOUNTER 7P (S) R Brown 7-12-0	Mr H Hankey (7)
4	0/PP	MARTIN TOM 82P P Morgan 8-12-0	Major O Ellwood (7)
5	PPPP	NOBODYS FLAME 7P T Mactaggart 10-12-0	Mr A Evans (7)
6	-RP4	PEATSVILLE 13P M Allen 6-12-0	Mr J Trice-Rolph (5)
7	1-23	PLUCKY PUNTER 20P (F) J Jones 10-12-0	Mr J L Llewellyn (5)
8	01-F	PRIDEWOOD GOLDING 35P (F) E Thomas 11-12-0	C Weaver (7)
9	-PFP	STONEYISLAND 13P Mrs A Price 9-12-0	Miss E J Jones (7)
10	P2F5	THE POINT IS 7P (F,G,S) P Hewitt 11-12-0	Mr B Pollock (5)
11	UP/P	EATONS 42P Mrs P Shaw 7-11-9	Miss M Coombe (7)
12	/P/2	SWORDELLA 25 (F,S) Andrew J Martin 10-11-9	Mr A Martin (7)
13	P-6U	THORNHILL 10 F Mathews 8-11-9	Mr S J Graham (7)
14	2-9U	VISION OF LIGHT 20P M Evans 8-11-9	Mr Edgar Byrne (7)

5-4 Swordella, 4-1 Late Encounter, 5-1 Plucky Punter, Dalametre, 10-1 others.

5.25 BROAD OAK NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,484: 3m 2f) (15)

1	5042	BOLD LEAP 10 P R Webber 6-11-10	D Thomas (3)
2	0441	SHARIAKANNDI 14 (G) J King 6-11-9	M Griffiths (3)
3	U300	BLAZE OF SONG 22 D Wintle 6-11-7	R Massey
4	401F	NOW WE KNOW 17 (G,S) M Sheppard 10-11-6	S Kelly (3)
5	0/P3	CROSS THE RUBICON 26 (B) C Brooks 7-11-5	C Rafter (7)
6	4-45	HIGH SUMMER 269 C Mann 8-11-3	J Magee
7	23P3	SAUCY NUN 14 (F,G) P Hiatt 6-11-1	E Husband
8	DP51	EAGER BEAVER 9 (S) N Twiston-Davies 6-10-13	J Goldstein (3)
9	4321	QUIET MOMENTS 14 (V,CD,F) P Murphy 5-10-13	L Aspell
10	10PP	SWEET CISEAUX 18 (B,BF,G) P Bowen 5-10-11	Sophie Mitchell
11	/PUP	JUNGLE KING 9 A J Wilson 9-10-0	Michael Brennan
12	14-0	CWM BYE 14 (F) Mrs A Price 7-10-0	J Mogford (5)
13	UP30	CUMBERLAND YOUTH 23 (B) C Carne 7-10-0	M Naughton (3)
14	0P08	CAPTAIN MORRIS 21 P Wegmann 6-10-0	G F Ryan
15	6P0P	MILLY LE MOSS 14 M Sheppard 9-10-0	A Bates

3-1 Quiet Moments, 9-2 Saucy Nun, 5-1 Shariakanndi, 13-2 Bold Leap, 7-1 others.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Aintree

Going: soft (good to soft in places)

2.00 (2m 4f hdle) 1, Promalee (C F Swan, 9-4 fav); 2, Rainwatch (6-1); 3, Samuel Wilderspin (11-1). 12 ran. 6l, nk. A O'Brien Tote: £3.30; £1.60, £2.40, £3.10. DF: £10.70. Trio: £81.70. CSF: £15.26.

2.35 (2m 4f ch) 1, Opera Hat (C O'Dwyer, 10-1); 2, Or Royal (5-2); 3, Strong Promise (2-1 jt-fav). One Man (f) 2-1 jt-fav. 5 ran. 1¾l, 23l. J Fowler. Tote: £9.40; £1.90, £1.80. DF: £8.10. CSF: £31.30.

3.10 (3m 1f ch) 1, Boss Doyle (A P McCoy, 5-4 fav); 2, Occold (16-1); 3, Castle Coin (50-1). 8 ran. 13l, 24l. M Morris. Tote: £2.20; £1.40, £2.70, £3.80. CSF: £19.70.

3.45 (2m 6f ch) 1, Cavalero (Mr A Charles-Jones, 33-1); 2, Elegant Lord (3-1 fav); 3, The Major General (10-1). 30 ran. 1¾l, dist. H Manners. Tote: £40.50; £9.00, £2.70, £3.00. DF: £125.50. CSF: £125.26.

4.20 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, Unsinkable Boxer (A P McCoy, 10-11 fav); 2, Brackenheath (25-1); 3, Cloone Bridge (5-1). 12 ran. NR: Churchtown Glen. 10l, 1l. M Pipe. Tote: £1.90; £1.30, £8.90, £1.80. DF: £44.00.

4.50 (2m 4f hdle) 1, Khayrawani (F M Berry, 4-1); 2, Cadougold (13-8 fav); 3, Fen Terrier (11-1). 8 ran. NR: Lucia Forte, Summer Spell. Nk, 8l. C Roche. Tote: £4.60; £1.80, £1.30, £2.20. DF: £4.00. Trio: £18.10. CSF: £10.27. Tricast: £58.15.

5.20 (3m 1f ch) 1, Blue Charm (Mr M Bradburne, 8-1); 2, Glitter Isle (5-2 fav); 3, Queen Of Spades (3-1). 6 ran. NR: Land Afar, Major Bell, Sniper. 5l, dist. Mrs S Bradburne. Tote: £7.10; £1.90, £1.80. DF: £9.50. Trio: £12.50. CSF: £22.76.

Jackpot: £14,815.10.

Placepot: £41.70 Quadpot: £5.90.

Sedgefield

Going: good to soft

2.10 (2m 5f 110yd hdle) 1, Gaultby Henpecked (N Hannity, 10-1); 2, Luathach (7-4 fav); 3, Beacon Hill Lady (33-1). 12 ran. NR: Bold Top, Canonbiebothered, Golden Bar, Sraffan Gold. 2l, 17l. G Moore. Tote: £12.90; £3.20, £2.30, £6.50. DF: £28.00. Trio: not won. CSF: £30.38. Tricast: £574.02.

2.45 (2m 110yd ch) 1, Quango (F Leahy, 9-4); 2, Fryup Satellite (2-1 fav); 3, Follow De Call (7-1). 8 ran. NR: Adamatic, Imustamit, Over Stated, Shining Edge, Silver Minx. 19l, 3½l. J Fitzgerald. Tote: £2.70; £1.10, £1.10, £2.80. DF: £3.40. Trio: £5.60. CSF: £6.27.

3.20 (2m 5f ch) 1, Hallidecent (P Niven, 7-4 fav; Timekeeper's top rating); 2, Stage Fright (3-1); 3, Deel Quay (10-1). 5 ran. NR: Dawn Lad, North Pride, Oakley, Rocket Run, Rustic Air, The Toaster. 5l, 6l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £2.00; £1.30, £1.80. DF: £2.50. Trio: £15.00. CSF: £7.03.

3.55 (3m 3f ch) 1, Fordstown (Mr J Alexander, 3-1); 2, Greenmount Lad (15-8); 3, Buck's Delight (7-4 fav). 5 ran. NR: Wind Force. 15l, 18l. J Barclay. Tote: £4.80; £1.80, £1.50. DF: £4.10. CSF: £8.53.

4.30 (2m 1f hdle) 1, Glenugie (N Bentley, 7-1); 2, Elusive Star (5-1); 3, Oversman (7-2 fav). 9 ran. NR: Bures, Red Jam Jar. 3l, 1¼l. G Moore. Tote: £11.20; £2.40, £1.50, £1.80. DF: £23.80. CSF: £37.78. Tricast: £129.82. Trio: £124.80.

5.00 (2m 1f hdle) 1, Queensway (L Wyer, evens fav); 2, Zain Dancer (3-1); 3, Lumback Lady (5-1). 12 ran. NR: Country Orchid, Midday Cowboy, The Mickletonian. 2l, 15l. J Fitzgerald. Tote: £2.10; £1.20, £1.10, £1.50. DF: £3.50. Trio: £3.80. CSF: £3.79.

Placepot: £12.40.

Quadpot: £6.30.

Lingfield Park

Going: standard

2.20 (5f) 1, Touch Up (K Fallon, 5-4); 2, Maytar Ballerina (10-1); 3, Stavanger (4-5 fav). 4 ran. 1½l, ½l. Miss Gay Kelleway. Tote: £1.90. DF: £7.90. CSF: £11.21.

2.55 (6f) 1, Hopeful Star (K Fallon, 9-4); 2, Sweet Palooza (5-2); 3, Barrow Creek (7-4 fav). 7 ran. 1½l, 1l. Miss G Kelleway. Tote: £3.20; £1.70, £1.90. DF: £6.10. CSF: £8.33.

3.30 (1m 2f) 1, Slip Venture (N Day, 13-8); 2, Browning (8-11 fav); 3, Verocity (9-1). 4 ran. 6l, 2½l. S Woods. Tote: £3.10. DF: £1.40. CSF: £2.98.

4.05 (6f) 1, Robo Magic (W Ryan, 6-4 fav); 2, Mystical (7-2); 3, Plein Gaz (12-1). 6 ran. Nk, 3½l. L Montague Hall. Tote: £1.70; £1.10, £2.40. DF: £2.20. CSF: £6.37.

4.40 (7f) 1, Phillistar (D Sweeney, 100-30); 2, Artenxenas (13-2); 3, Salty Jack (11-2). Witchfinder 6-4 fav. 7 ran. 1¼l, ¾l. K Burke. Tote: £3.90; £3.20, £1.50. DF: £14.50. CSF: £24.75.

5.10 (1m 2f) 1, Sakharov (A McCarthy, 10-1); 2, Ardent (14-1); 3, Welcome Heights (2-1 fav). 10 ran. 2½l, hd. P Eccles. Tote: £14.50; £3.30, £3.20, £1.50. DF: £84.70. Trio: £264.00. CSF: £144.07. Tricast: £368.88.

Placepot: £184.80. Quadpot: £27.30.

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RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Southwell (AW, 2.20), Fontwell Park (2.10), Kelso (2.00).

TUESDAY: Wolverhampton (AW, 2.20), Folkestone (2.00), Nottingham (2.10)

WEDNESDAY: Ripon (2.20), Ascot (2.00). Ludlow (2.10).

THURSDAY: Lingfield Park (AW, 2.00), Leicester (2.10), Musselburgh (2.20)

FRIDAY: No racing.

SATURDAY: Haydock Park (BBC, 2.00), Kempton Park (C4, 2.05), Carlisle (2.15), Plumpton (2.05), Towcester (2.20), Newton Abbot (2.15), Wolverhampton (AW, 7.00).

Flat meetings in bold

SQUASH

Jansher in mood to confound doubters

BY COLIN MCQUILLAN

JANSHER KHAN'S problems in defence of the British Open championship at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham accumulate almost daily, but his quarter-final opponent yesterday, Paul Johnson, failed to join the list.

Johnson, from Kent, the England No 3, won the Apawamis Open in New York in January and the Hungarian Open in Budapest last month. This week he was promoted to world No 11 for the first time and the British Squash Professionals Association gave him their most improved player award.

But the 25-year-old left-hander learnt a salutary lesson yesterday. Jansher was still out of reach, by a margin of 15-11, 15-11, 17-15, and capable of cruelly closing off a deficit of 13-8 in the third game as if it did not exist.

Jansher is officially listed as still being 28 years old, although he jokes of the problems of slowing up mentally and physically at the age of 30. For students of Pakistani birth registrations in squash, this provides an illuminating aside.

He had his tonsils removed in December but picked up a throat infection in Karachi on his way to London from his home in Peshawar. He has been wearing bandages on both knees this year, but claims he cannot feel the tear in the cartilage of his left knee and experiences only brief spasms of pain from the displaced cap of his right knee.

"They are writing me off, but I know inside myself that I am still the best," he said yesterday during an impromptu changing-room press call after his quarter-final.

At the start of the conversation he looked far from the "best". In an Urdu interview for the BBC World Service he sounded positively depressed. It was only as he warmed to the story of his doubtful approach to a sixth successive defence of the British Open title that his usual humour surfaced.

"I was saved by the gargles," he declared. "I went to see a doctor in Karachi. I couldn't eat. I was weak like a woman.

The doctor told me to gargle night and morning with salt and Disprin. I am cured. I can eat again."

In the women's championship, the No 4 seed, Cassandra Jackman, of Norfolk, reached a semi-final against the world champion, Sarah Fitz-Gerald, of Australia, with a 10-8, 9-6, 9-7 win over Sabine Schöne, of Germany.

TENNIS: POWER PLAY SPEEDS RUSEDSKI TO VICTORY IN FIRST MATCH OF DAVIS CUP TIE

Henman capitalises on perfect start

BY JULIAN MUSCAT
TENNIS CORRESPONDENT

TIM HENMAN yesterday gained his first career success over Andrei Medvedev to give Great Britain a powerful advantage in their Davis Cup match against Ukraine in Newcastle.

Henman's victory, in five sets coupled with Greg Rusedski's earlier triumph leaves Britain one rubber short of overall victory in this match, which continues with the doubles today.

The only way Rusedski might become familiar with capitulation is by looking up its meaning in his dictionary. Committed to the tips of his laces, Rusedski dismissed Andrei Rybalko in straight sets yesterday to give Great Britain the lead.

DAVIS CUP

[illegible]

Nothing less was expected of Rusedski, some abject Davis Cup surrenders by his predecessors meant that victory could not be taken for granted. Some felt uneasy about Rybalko's lowly world ranking but Rusedski, now firmly out of the camp short of Tim Henman's summit, showed just why he has scaled such heights. The world No 5 had 52 ranking places in hand of Rybalko and he made the difference tell.

Rybalko, who spent his formative teens years in Canada, later explained why the vast difference in ability gave him no anxious moments. "I never think about the ranking of my opponent and that's probably the best thing I do," he said.

"I give each player the same respect. You have to handle it the same way when it comes to the Davis Cup."

To label Rybalko a journeyman is to pay him a compliment. The clay-court specialist carves out a living in the game's basement, yet Rusedski maintained both before and after the match that Rybalko was no lamb to the slaughter. He well remembered how the Ukrainian wrecked Tim Henman to five sets in Kiev eight months ago. This vigilance properly prepared him for some dogged early resistance.

Rybalko's obduracy in the opening exchanges marked the only passage of parity in the contest. In an opening game lasting ten minutes, he saved five break points and took heart from an usually profligate response. The Briton levelled the score, but not before he had negated one ace with a foot fault and a second with a double fault. Then Rybalko, never given the benefit of several close line calls, saved the first of three break points before another dubious call prompted the ill-timed interjection of Olexandr Dolgopolov, the Ukraine coach. While Dolgopolov protested to the umpire, Cedric Mourier, Rybalko was kept waiting at 15-40 — and promptly double-faulted. Rusedski duly consolidated to establish clear water and the contest was as good as over.

Like so many before him, Rybalko could never adequately read Rusedski's service. The Briton's first delivery lacked its trademark accuracy but he more than compensated with a flurry of second-service winners. So much so that Rusedski dropped a solitary point on service in snaring the second set 6-0. Any early butterflies had long since been evicted from his mind as his returns started to bite.

In the third set, a neatly contrived break for 2-1 gave Rusedski an advantage he was never likely to relinquish. He could even afford to correct the umpire when the official missed a let from Rybalko, which Rusedksi had rifled away for a clean winner. That enabled Rybalko to hold from 0-40, but even he must have known that the end was in sight. Rusedski finished with a flourish by recording his sixteenth ace at match point, having required 96 minutes to complete a 6-4, 6-0, 6-4 victory.

As is his prerogative, David Lloyd, the Great Britain team captain, has clearly chosen a surface to favour his players. Rusedski thrives on a fast carpet and Lloyd's decision to install the same surface used in the Battersea Park tent looks like paying handsomely.

"It is a very quick court, slightly quicker than grass," Rusedski opined. "I felt I was in control throughout. I came out relaxed and loose, and pressed him all the way. He can give you a difficult time if you let him play."

Rusedski's overall dominance was such that Lloyd, from his courtside seat, enjoyed watching the match. "Greg's service was superb," he said. "You don't have to say very much when he plays like that. It is just the start we needed."

Rusedski, who pays heed to official post-match statistics, will be delighted to note that he dropped just six points on service in the last two sets. He was taken to deuce just once in the match despite his assertion that "it was not a fabulous day for my first service".

Victory for Great Britain in this Euro/African Zone One second-round match would project the team towards a promotion play-off for a place in the World Group, comprising 16 nations.



Rusedski was rarely under pressure while beating Rybalko in straight sets. Photograph: Gary M Prior/Allsport

SNOOKER

Scotsman brings a smile to the Open

BY PHIL YATES

CRAIG MacGILLIVRAY, whose amusing impersonations of Stephen Hendry and Alex Higgins have enlivened many tournaments backstage, showed that he has the ability to be much more than a mimic in Plymouth yesterday.

The effervescent Scot, No 159 in the world, scored only his second victory of the season when he defeated Tony Chappel, of Swansea, 5-3, to reach the last 64 of the British Open.

MacGillivray had failed to win a match since a solitary success at the Grand Prix in October. Disillusioned, his commitment to practice has suffered. Trailing 3-1 at the interval, he realised the error of his ways. "My preparation left an awful lot to be desired and I sat there, drinking a cup of tea, despising myself for being so lazy," he said.

The result of his annoyance was an appreciably improved performance. He compiled breaks of 73, 63, 45, 46 and 40 to win four consecutive frames and earn a meeting with Stephen Lee, the No 16 seed.

MacGillivray has collected only £30,000 in prize-money in seven years as a professional, but this win has guaranteed him a minimum payday of £2,100. "People think that being a snooker player is glamorous, but for the majority of us it's anything but," he said.

To supplement his income, MacGillivray works at the Shandon snooker centre, in Edinburgh, and last year acted as straight man for Sid Waddell on Sky Sports' coverage of the world Nine-Ball Pool Masters.

Peter McCullagh, at No 162 the only player below MacGillivray to negotiate the cut-throat qualifying school last summer that determined the composition of the 96-man main tour, also advanced to the last 64.

McCullagh, employed on a part-time basis in his father's accountancy business and as introverted as MacGillivray is extroverted, defeated Tony Jones, the 1991 European Open champion, 5-1.

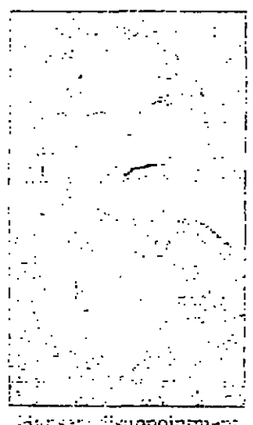
Jamie Burnett, of Hamilton, who, after six years of relative obscurity, is beginning to fulfil the potential that he showed when winning the United Kingdom junior championship as a 14-year-old, displayed the self-assurance that can only be generated by recent success during a 5-0 whitewash of Leigh Griffin.

Burnett, conqueror of Stephen Hendry in the Grand Prix and Regal Welsh Open this season, compiled breaks of 68, 67 and 81.

ATHLETICS: FINANCIAL WORRIES FORCE BRITISH CHAMPION CLUBS TO CONSIDER EUROPEAN WITHDRAWAL

Hansen's schedule may be thrown off track

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRRESPONDENT



Hansen disappointment

ASHIA HANSEN has expressed dismay at the prospect of her club, Shaftesbury Barnet, having to give up its place in the European clubs' championship next month because it may not be able to meet the cost of taking part. Both champion clubs of Britain are threatening to pull out for financial reasons, with Belgrave Harriers, on the men's side, in similar difficulties.

Hansen has been looking forward to opening her outdoor season at the women's championship on May 30 in Vilamoura, Portugal, where, she said, she was expecting to face Sarka Kasparkova and Rodica Mateescu. Kasparkova, from the Czech Republic, won the gold medal and Mateescu, from Romania, the silver at the world championships in Athens last August.

Of Shaftesbury Barnet's prospective withdrawal, Hansen said: "It would be a real blow if we do not go, because this is a chance to measure my early-season form against two of the best triple-jumpers in the world."

Five weeks after setting an indoor world record in winning the European title in Valencia, Hansen leaves today for three weeks' training in Italy. Her main summer goal is the European outdoor title, but she will also carry into the season the conviction that she can challenge the outdoor world record of 15.50 metres set in 1995 by Inessa Kravets, of Ukraine.

Hansen's indoor world record is 15.16 metres and, as her international profile grows, so the opportunities to serve her club diminish. Shaftesbury Barnet qualified for the first time and Hansen feels especially disappointed for her clubmates. "For the team, it is very damaging," Hansen said. "We have made it this far and I know we could do really well."

The insolvent British Athletic Federation (BAF) is powerless to help and unless a solution is found, it will be the first time in the 23-year history of European men's club competition that Britain will not be represented.

The British League, without a sponsor, has reduced its grant by one-third and the BAF, which usually gives £4,000 towards the men's champions' costs, cannot spend against creditors' money. The Foundation for Sport and the Arts, hit by declining pools revenue, no longer contributes.

David Moorcroft, the chairman of Performance Athlete Services (PAS), which manages the World Class Performance programme, said: "PAS funding is about support to the 200-odd athletes and their participation in major international events for Great Britain. That precludes us getting money for club teams."

Howard Darbon, leader of the athletics service team for the English Sports Council, which distributes National Lottery funding, said that money for European club competition was not available.

The patron of Belgrave is Sir Eddie Kulukundis, the sport's most generous private benefactor. However, Bill Laws, the Belgrave team manager, said: "As a matter of principle, I do not think he should help us. It is a matter for the governing bodies of the sport and the Sports Council."

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Chicago Cubs ... Florida 7, Pittsburgh 4 (Montreal 2, St Louis 0; Los Angeles 5, Cincinnati 4; San Diego ... Milwaukee 9, Atlanta 6; Philadelphia ... Mets 5, San Francisco 0; Houston ... Colorado 6, Arizona 4.
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Boston ... Baltimore 4, Kansas City 3; Tampa Bay ... Detroit 1, Minnesota 3; Toronto ... Chicago White Sox 4, Anaheim ... Yankees 2.

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: London ... 97 Thames Valley, Tonight 92, Bees, Sunday 76 Leicester Riders 93.
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP: Quarter-final play-offs: Fenerbahce ... CSKA Moscow 90 (Ostrovski 24, Semenov 19, Ilin 16, Elov Pilon ...
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION: ... 111 Minnesota 108; ... Clippers 70, LA Lakers 117; ... Golden State 107, Miami 89; Seattle ...

BOWLS

MELTON MOWBRAY: English Indoor Bowls Association national championships: Singles. First round: ... Durrant (Preston) bt R B ... Park 21-11; D Corrigan (Tees) ... Robertson (Shepreth) 21-17; ... (Ilminster) bt M Evans (Tamworth) ... 15; T Smith (Saltash) ... (Bentham) 21-14; D Christie ... bt N Bellchi (Essex County) ... (Mole Valley) bt P Morgan ... 17; N Carbon (Prospect) bt P ... (Old Mill) 21-17; S McKenzie ... Caton (Brownson Hall) ... Forest) bt N Brett (Hunmanby) ... lung (Fingerpost Park) ... (Cyphers) 21-3; K Henderson ... H Brownson (Hall of Cards) ... (Thornaby) bt J Allen ... Walton (Ryedale) bt R Smith ... 21-15; P Bennett (Scarborough) ... (Cumbria) 21-7; A Friend ... L Gillett (Banbury) 21-17. Second round: Moen bt Durrant 21-12; Bellchi ... 21-11; Smith bt Christie ... Corbyn 21-17; Mills bt ... Henderson bt Lung 21-15; Walton bt Brown 21-11; Bennett bt Friend 21-12. Pairs. Semi-finals: S Stevens and I Sones ... bt M Tomlin and L Foan, (Bedford) ... Springett and G Grace (Hawks Club) ... Wilson and G Plaskett (Scunthorpe) ...

CRICKET

Triangular tournament
One-day international
Australia v Zimbabwe

AHMEDABAD (Australia won toss and elected to bat) Australia ... to beat Zimbabwe ... 10 overs.

AUSTRALIA

†A C Gilchrist low b Streak	16
M E Waugh low b A R Whittall	...
R T Ponting run out	...
M G Bevan c Streak b Evans	...
*S R Waugh b G J Whittall	...
D S Lehmann b Streak	...
T M Moody run out	...
S K Warne not out	...
G R Robertson not out	...
Extras: lb 1, w 3, nb 6	10
Total (7 wkts, 50 overs)	...

D W Fleming and A C Dale did not bat.

[illegible]

ZIMBABWE

[illegible]

Total (49.5 overs) ... 239

[illegible]

FOOTBALL

Thursday's late results:

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS CUP: Semi-finals, first leg: ... J Pomsel ...

EUROPEAN CUP-WINNERS CUP: Semi-finals, first leg: ... S Schemmel (Sp) ...

AMATEUR IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: ...

FA CARLSBERG NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: ...

SCOTTISH LEAGUES

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Division 1							
Raith	35	19	11	5	61	31	68
Airdrie	35	18	9	8	61	36	63
Clyde	35	17	9	9	58	41	60
Dunfermline	35	16	9	10	58	41	57
Ayr	35	15	9	11	52	43	54
Hamilton	35	14	9	12	49	46	51
Partick	35	13	8	14	46	49	47
Falkirk	35	12	8	15	46	52	44
Ross County	35	11	8	16	43	54	41
Stranraer	35	10	7	18	41	59	37
Inverness CT	35	9	8	18	39	58	35
Stenhousemuir	35	8	7	20	36	62	31

Division 2: ... Leading first-round scores: ... 65 ...

GOLF

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana: Freeport McDermott Classic. Leading first-round scores (US unless stated): 64: S Dye, 66: J ... 67: T Armour, D A ... Gogel, T Scott, S ... Kelly, B ... Lancaster, R ... Gilmore (Japan), J ... 69: B Henninger, J ... Tway, D ... Gresham, C Howell, ... McGovern ... Ranger, J Ozaki ... 70: ... Pampling (Aus) ... 71: ... Winchester bt Wallingborough 4-1; Loretto bt Marlborough 3-2; Highgate bt St Paul's 3-2; Harrow bt Mill Hill 3½-1½. Second round: Bradfield bt Edinburgh Academy 3-2 (at the 23rd hole); Fettes bt Cranleigh 3-2; Charterhouse bt Liverpool 3½-1½; Shrewsbury bt Wrekin 3-2; Clifton bt Haileybury, 3-2; Aldenham bt St Bees 3-2; Watson's bt Ampleforth 3½-1½; Epsom bt Shrewsbury 3-2; Tonbridge bt Wellington 5-0

HOCKEY

MILTON KEYNES: Inter-league play-offs: Pool A: Eastcote 3 Peterborough Town 2. Pool B: Oxford Hawks 2 Harborne 1.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Washington 4 Tampa Bay 1, Philadelphia 3 Los Angeles 0, San Jose 3 Ottawa 3, Chicago 2 Colorado 1.

RACKETS

LACOSTE BRITISH OPEN DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP: Quarter-finals: N Smith and S Hazell bt J Grant and M Farrer-Brown 15-6, 15-6, 15-2, 15-0; M Hubbard and R Walkely, walk-over J Male and M Hue Williams bt T and W Sawrey-Cookson 15-3, 15-7, 15-0, 15-10; W Boone and P Brake bt H Angus and A Scammell 15-5, 15-7, 15-10, 15-0.

REAL TENNIS

LORD'S: British Land amateur singles championship: Quarter-finals: J Snow bt J Prenn 6-3, 6-1, 6-0; M Howard bt A Page 6-3, 6-1, 6-4; J Willcocks bt I Snell 6-2, 6-2, 6-2; N Pendrigh bt N O'Hagan 6-3, 6-1, 6-1.

RUGBY LEAGUE

ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP: Halifax 2 Sheffield 10; Hunslet 14 Wigan 44; St Helens 26 Salford 25.
CLUB MATCH: Dewsbury 6 Oldham 20.
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL LEAGUE: Melbourne 24 North Sydney 16; Sydney City 30 Illawarra 16; Manly 10 Parramatta 34.

RUGBY UNION

A international match

England	40	Ireland	30

England A: Tries: Brown, Fidler, Gilles, Lewsey, Mensah, Stimpson. Cons: Stimpson 2. Pens: Stimpson 2. Ireland A: Tries: Everitt, McWeeney, Murphy. Cons: Woods 3. Pens: Woods 3. Att: 5,000.
(at Richmond)

Under-21 international matches

England	7	Ireland	9

England Under-21: Try: Pritchard. Con: Brown. Ireland Under-21: Pens: O'Gara 3.
(at Richmond)

Wales	14	France	3

Wales Under-21: Try: Cull. Pens: Cull 3. France Under-21: Pen: Elissalde.
(at South Wales Police)

Super 12 tournament

Wellington	30	Golden Cats	15

Wellington Hurricanes: Tries: Umaga, Howlett. Con: Holwell. Pens: Holwell 6. Golden Cats: Tries: A Venter, Ellis. Con: Smith. Pen: Smith.
(at Rugby Park, New Plymouth)

SKIING

TIGNES, France: British Land children's national Championships: Team: France Slalom: Boys: Children 2 (Year of birth 83-84): 1, P McMillan (Glasgow) 38.38sec; 2, A Noble (Edinburgh) 38.50; 3, J Miles (London) 38.76. Children 1 (85-86): 1, J Hunt (St Albans) 40.74; 2, R Rennie (Edinburgh) 41.54; 3, E Drake (Kingston-upon-Thames) 42.4. Girls: Children 2: 1, K Head (Oxford) 43.82; 2, L Spafford (Enfield) 44.35; 3, E Sarsfield (Durham) 45.10. Children 1: 1, L Sharp (Glasgow) 45.54; 2, R Travers (Glasgow) 46.83; 3, K McGarry (Dublin) 48.28.

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SNOOKER

PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS: British Open: First round: W Thorne (Eng) bt P Wykes (Eng) 5-3; J Perry (Eng) bt D Taylor (N Ire) 5-3; D O'Kane (NZ) bt T Shaw (Eng) 5-4; C Scanlon (Eng) bt M Dzewaltowski (Scot) 5-4; J Burnett (Scot) bt L Griffin (Eng) 5-0; P McCullagh (Eng) bt T Jones (Eng) 5-1; C MacGillivray (Scot) bt T Chappel (Wales) 5-3; G Dott (Scot) bt W Brown (Eng) 5-2; M Judge (Ire) bt M Campbell (Scot) 5-1; S Mezroots (Eng) bt A Burden (Eng) 5-3, S Ali (Pak) bt L Richardson (Eng) 5-3; N Pearce (Eng) bt P Lines (Eng) 5-4.

SPEEDWAY

SPEEDWAY STAR CUP: Ipswich 49 Eastbourne 41: Postponed: Belle Vue v Swindon (track waterlogged).
CHALLENGE MATCHES: Swindon 44 Poole 46 (Swindon win 94-86 on aggregate). Sheffield 16 Hull 8 (abandoned after 4 heats, heavy rain). Postponed: Isle of Wight v Exeter (track waterlogged).
PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Postponed: Edinburgh v Berwick (track waterlogged).

SQUASH

NATIONAL INDOOR ARENA, Birmingham: British Open: Men: Second round: P Nicol (Scot) bt C Walker (Eng) 15-12, 15-7, 15-9. Quarter-finals: Jansher Khan (Pak) bt P Johnson (Eng) 15-11, 15-11, 17-15; D Jenson (Aus) bt D Evans (Wales) 9-15, 15-11, 15-5, 15-8. Women: Second round: S Wright (Eng) bt N Grainger (SA) 3-9, 9-6, 9-4, 9-5; S Horner (Eng) bt T Shenton (Eng) 9-4, 9-2, 9-4. Quarter-finals: S Fitz-Gerald (Aus) bt F Geaves (Eng) 9-1, 9-6, 9-5; C Jackman (Eng) bt S Schone (Ger) 10-8, 9-6, 9-7.

TENNIS

HILTON HEAD, South Carolina: Family Circle Cup: Second round: A Miller (US) bt M Pierce (Fr) 6-3, 6-3; A Coetzer (SA) bt S Farina (It) 6-4, 6-3; P Schnyder (Switz) bt L McNeil (US) 6-3, 6-2; M Serna (Sp) bt E Likhovtseva (Russ) 7-5, 2-6, 6-2; A Fusca (Fr) bt C Torrens-Valero (Sp) 7-6, 6-7, 6-4. Third round: L Davenport (US) bt R Dragomir (Rom) 1-6, 6-3, 7-5; M Seles (US) bt N Zvereva (Bela) 6-0, 6-7, 6-2; I Spirlea (Rom) bt M Grzybowska (Pol) 6-3, 6-4; Schnyder bt M de Swardt (SA) 6-3, 6-2; Serna bt J Novotna (Cz) 3-6, 6-4, 6-2; A Glass (Ger) bt Fusca 6-3, 7-6; L Raymond (US) bt Miller 1-6, 6-2, 6-3; Coetzer bt V Pascual-Ruano (Sp) 6-0, 6-4.
DAVIS CUP: Latest scores: World group: Slovakia 1 Sweden 0 (in Bratislava); Australia 1 Zimbabwe 1 (in Mildura), Italy 1 India 0 (in Genoa); Germany 2 South Africa 0 (in Bremen); Brazil 1 Spain 0 (in Porto Alegre), Switzerland 1 Czech Republic 0 (in Zurich). Asia-Oceania zone: Group one: Japan 2 New Zealand 0 (in Miyazaki); South Korea 1 Uzbekistan 1 (in Seoul). Group two: Thailand 1 Philippines 1 (in Manila); Pakistan 2 Pacific Oceania 0 (in Islamabad). Euro-African zone: Group one: France 2 Finland 0 (in Helsinki), Romania 2 Norway 0 (in Bucharest), Israel 2 Austria 0 (in Tel Aviv). American zone: Group two: Peru 1 Jamaica 0 (in Lima); Venezuela 1 Guatemala 0 (in Caracas), Uruguay 1 Paraguay 1 (in Montevideo).

SPORT IN BRIEF

Campbell fails to save Zimbabwe from defeat

■ **CRICKET:** Alistair Campbell, the Zimbabwe captain, scored a superb century, but could not prevent his team slipping to a 13-run defeat against Australia in the tri-nation one-day series in Ahmedabad, India. Campbell, who opened the innings, was last man out off the penultimate delivery for 103. Zimbabwe, chasing Australia's 252 for seven, were within sight of victory when a 91-run stand between Campbell and Murray Goodwin, who made 55, took them to 143 for one in the thirtieth over. However, they then lost their next four wickets for 20 runs and the last five for 76, and were dismissed for 239. Michael Bevan made the top score for Australia with 65, while Ricky Ponting made 53.

Doohan beats own record

■ **MOTORCYCLING:** Michael Doohan, the 500cc world champion, was fastest in the first qualifying session yesterday for the Japanese Grand Prix in Suzuka, which opens the season tomorrow. Despite complaining that the new regulations enforcing the use of unleaded fuel would slow down his Honda, the Australian lapped the 3.644-mile track in 2min 07.641sec, well inside his own 1997 Suzuka circuit record. Doohan, who is pursuing his fifth successive 500cc title, was pushed hard by Noriyuki Haga, of Japan. Tadayuki Okada, also of Japan, was third fastest.

Dampier leaves Steelers

■ **ICE HOCKEY:** Alex Dampier and Sheffield Steelers parted company yesterday after a successful six-season association in which the club won several trophies. Dampier's final game in charge of Sheffield was always rumoured to be last Saturday's third/fourth place play-off win at the Nynex Arena over Manchester Storm — and so it proved. Newcastle Cobras and the new London franchise are believed to be among those ready to ensure that Dampier has a future in Superleague. Ken Priestley, a player, is favourite to take over at Steelers.

Smith stays focused

■ **CURLING:** David Smith and his team of Scottish champions from Perth start their world title assault in Kamloops, Canada, today with a game against a Norwegian side that struggled in the last European championships. However, Smith, who skipped the world championship-winning Perth team in 1991, does not see the match as an easy world title opener. "You just can't afford to do that," he said. "Taking it easy is the way to disaster."

هكذا من الأصل

Scotsman brings a smile to the Open

By [illegible]

CRAIG [illegible] whose [illegible] imperson[illegible]ations of Stephen Hendry and Alex Higgins [illegible] enlivened many tournaments backstage showed that he has the ability to be more [illegible] than a mimic on Plymouth yesterday.

The [illegible] No 150 in the world [illegible] only his second victory of the season [illegible] by defeated Tony Chappel [illegible] Swansea 5-3, to reach the [illegible] of the British Open.

Macleod [illegible] had failed to win a match since a solitary success at the Grand Prix in October. [illegible] practice he suffered [illegible] at the interval [illegible] the error of his ways [illegible] paranoia left an [illegible] desire and I sat [illegible] drinking a cup of tea, deciding myself to [illegible] being so [illegible] and

The result was an [illegible] performance, [illegible] breaks [illegible] frames [illegible] with [illegible] need.

Macleod [illegible]

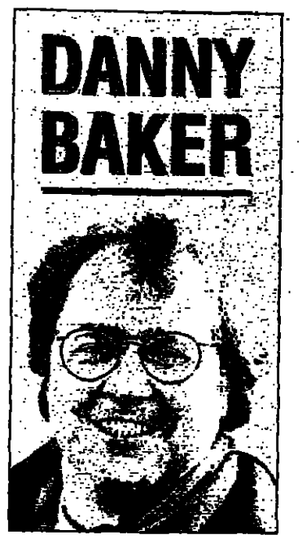
ails to save from defea

is own record

ves Steelers

focused

Shock news about our violent fans



Last weekend was deemed a dark one for English football and its supporters and indeed it was. Yet both the unrest at Barnsley and the death at Gillingham were treated with the same fatuous distancing as these shocking events always produce. That is "these people" were at it again. It is a lie, it is pat and it is lazy.

Football and football supporters are not outside or apart from ordinary life in Britain. Football is not peculiar in its patterns, behaviours, order or disorders. In fact, while by no means a matter for congratulations, when you consider the idea that, outside of war, soccer sees the world's greatest regular coming together of males and unchecked passions, it is a marvel that the arrangement yields as little disgrace as it does.

One of the most enduring and paranoic myths about supporters is the idea of organised football violence. The notion that the ugliness that scars each season is the cleverly orchestrated actions of certain well-drilled sects within the game, whose every hour is spent playing cat and mouse with the police and are as much a wily, trained force as the IRA, is pure trash. The truth is that the police are actually dealing with something far more dangerous than organised football violence. And that is unorganised football violence. The same dark beast that prowls pubs, nightclubs, city streets and the home. It is its very randomness that makes it so impossible to combat. Yet we constantly hear of fans having "generals" or "recruiters" "thug networks" and "crowd leaders".

No. The "generals" and the attendant minority of rabble rousers who apparently are both "known" and "under constant surveillance" are simply the visible, easy, PR-end of the security headache. If football violence were organised, it would be a fraction of the problem it is. After all, last week's awful death took palce outside *Gillingham's* ground for God's sake. And yet here was David Mellor et al, shaking heads and wringing hands and jabbering about the game "slipping back into the abyss" and "the few spoiling it for everyone" as though the multifarious confusion of personalities that attend matches each week were a manageable whole, a classroom of boys on probation, a single thought. As Brian Clough once said: "Funny when there's an armed robbery in a supermarket nobody seeks to blame Marks and Spencer." Of course the authorities have to say something, but the idea of plotting cells of "other people", of bogeymen, of "thugs under the bed" is risible.

Now, adding to the gloom of the last seven days, we see the outrageous and insidious TV campaign warning people not to dare come out to see the World Cup without tickets. It seeks to shepherd supporters toward government-hosted information sites that will tell them the rules about attending matches. So much for freedom of movement in the EC. So much for The People's Tournament. This is not a necessary security measure. This is panic, paranoia and bullying. The last half-dozen or so violent outbreaks at international matches in Europe have squarely been blamed on heavy-handed policing; and all this repressive, and possibly illegal, campaign does is give security forces more room to push people around. The World Cup is for anybody who wishes to attend. It is not beyond any one nation's organisational skills. There is no suggestion that this World Cup is a tinderbox unlike any other and that each game needs policing so far beyond an ordinary fixture that laws about freedom of movement must be drafted.

So, after seeing this disturbing and revolting TV ad, I am urging everyone I know to holiday at the World Cup this year: it is on our doorstep and should be fantastic. I shall instruct all those who are turned away — despite having paid for a seat at a football match through whatever source they choose — to organise outside the ground. Where, of course, they will be shoved, intimidated and probably interned. Then we might all ponder how odd it is than a "small minority" seem to have panicked the entire European security system into surrender and martial law.

During the live radio coverage of Barnsley's tumultuous game against Liverpool, as the Barnsley fans — another hotbed? — invaded the pitch and the referee took a police escort off the field, inevitably one of the commentators said: "This is disgraceful, there can be no reason whatsoever for people getting on the pitch," unaware that this is one of the dumbest clichés in the world. Of course there's a reason people get on the pitch. There has to be. And you're looking right at it. The reason IS football. You know, that same thing advertisers, publishers, TV, heart-seeking politicians and the entire soccer industry have been bellowing about ever louder this past ten years or so. Big happy old football — the brand new family game! "Eat football, sleep football" one campaign tells us. Shame so many people seem lost in a dream about football too.



Barnsley v Liverpool: more typically unorganised violence

■ **FACT:** In a recent poll to discover which footballers had breasts like ladies', the top three votes were for John Hartson, Jan Molby and Thomas Brolin.
■ **CONNECTED FACT:** John Hartson has a reputation of personal confrontation when goaded!
■ **FACT:** As instigator of the poll I was not allowed to vote for anyone. However, all those who did I keep on file.

Bobby, Jimmy, gone for ever

In a moment of rascally inspiration recently, Chris Evans told listeners to his radio show that my true name was David Baker. Inventing a suitably mundane story to accompany this delicious concoction he has succeeded in making even close acquaintances look at me askance. Relaying the confusion the gag had caused, I announced to Chris last week that I intended to up the stakes by adopting the David handle permanently, and he encouraged the idea, going so far as to conjure up the superbly sub-Wildean thought that "the only people who go by their true names these days have something to hide."

Now, while not 100 per cent true, there may actually be something in his booze-boosted logic. Certainly in two instances, footballers live in almost uniform denial of their given handles. The chief casualty in this titular purge would seem to be Bobby. For more than 600 years, the correct diminutive of Robert was always Bob or Bobby and, until recently, it was virtually a law that no side could take to the pitch without at least half a dozen Bobbys. Bobby Charlton. Bob Wilson. Bobby Gould. Now that name is as extinct as smallpox. Robbie Fowler. Rob Jones. Robbie Mustoe.

Similarly there has been some kind of pogrom inflicted against Jimmy. Again, if ever a name walked up to you shook you warmly by the hand and called you "comrade" it was the rank four-square chumminess of "Jimmy". Jimmy Greaves. Jim Leighton. Jimmy Armfield. Today the very idea seems as quaint as a Cecil, a Jeremiah, an Isambard. We have Jamie Redknapp. Jamie Fullerton. Jamie Pollock. I suppose, like us all, modern players are more influenced by the dictates of pop music than their ancestors, and Robbie Williams was always going to be more of a siren than Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys.

Perhaps the most radical overhauling of what P.G. Wodehouse referred to as "the rough work pulled at the font" concerns the manager of Charlton Athletic. Here's the story. I was recently reeling from spending a breathless day in the company of Led Zeppelin's Robert "Not Robbie" Plant and Jimmy "Not Jamie" Page together with their manager, John Curbishley. John, as you've no doubt figured, turns out to be the brother of Addicks' boss Alan. Later, on revealing this to a pair of friends, they trumped my titbit by announcing that they were in fact at school with the Curbishley boys and that, though John may indeed be a John, Alan is a modern invention possibly not as old as satellite TV or Tamagotchi virtual pets. For, years ago, when they larkishly banged the blackboard duster out on the back of the young Curbishley's blazer, he was, according to them, undeniably already a gifted footballer. But an Alan? No sir! He rejoiced in the kind of first name that no child in a North London playground might either forgive or forget. He was Llewelyn Curbishley.

□ Danny Baker is on Talk Radio (1053-1089am) every Saturday at 11.30am and 5.30pm.

Llewelyn! And that young men called Llewelyn are forced to renounce such magnificent labelling and seek refuge in the safe austerity of "Alan" says more about the slide into corporate conformity football has suffered since the war than any amount of share issues and hospitality suites ever could.

And it must stop, right now. So, footballers arise! Return to your roots! My name is Danny Baker — and I will fight the man who says it's not! Bobby, Jim, Llewelyn — the door has been kicked aside! Now let us run, run into the light! Back to the land of our fathers!

Wager that'll have you floating on air

While not yet strictly a sport, something I discovered this week does seem to have the potential to draw a large crowd and, more importantly, earn its active participants money via the "off-track" wagering that inevitably results (something that cannot be said for ice-skating). Here it is. Take two cans of Coca-Cola. One a regular can of Coke the other a can of Diet Coke. Place them one after the other into a large tubful of water. The regular Coke sinks but the Diet Coke floats. While your audience marvels and arguments break out, grab the takings and flee to the next town. Now, as to why it works . . . I have no idea.

Mr Ferguson and the disappearing white sign

The signs for Manchester United are getting worse. A few weeks ago I exclusively revealed the (theoretical) news that Alex Ferguson had resigned. This hypothesis was largely based on the glow on Alex's nose suddenly dimming in harmony with United's previously brilliant form and his own fanatical dedication to the cause. I'll own up to being unsure at the time whether, chicken and egg-like, the terrible form had doused the hooter or the hooter heralded the terrible form.

Now I know it is indeed Alex that is physically spent and it is the team's energy reacting in its wake. Despite a weak and scrambled victory last week, I cannot have been alone among onlookers in being shocked to see Ferguson so indifferent to the eventual outcome that he had jettisoned the only other talisman outside his famous crimson bugle that might be judged an ever-present in this armoury of omens — his dogged speck of spit.

Ever since I have been aware of Alex Ferguson as a managerial force he has been accompanied in all cutaway shots showing him directing operations form the bench by a small spot of white spume that set up permanent residence on the tip of his tongue. Nobody, neither friend or foe of this mighty club, can conjure up a picture of its Grossen Taktikführer without envisaging the eternal struggle that took place each match as Fergie fought to expel whatever it was from the edge of his gob. Identifying this rogue blob of matter almost became a game-within-a-game among my circle with all the spills and thrills of the main event itself.

It soon became plain that he immovable fleck on Fergie's lower lip was as much a reliable augury as the monkeys on Gibraltar or the ravens at the Tower. Last weekend it was gone. Whether it was sacked by surgery or natural causes we don't yet know. All we have to muse on are the words of the ancient seer:

Nose Dimm'd
Absence of Spit
Man United
Are Deep In the Mire.

I said he was a seer. Not a poet.

BOWLS

Smith puts paid to champion

By David Rhys Jones

A STRONG field for the Frizzell national indoor singles championship at Melton Mowbray, including five men who played for England at Swansea last month, looked less formidable after the first round yesterday.

Tony Allcock, the world outdoor champion, was promptly dispatched by Nigel Smith, of Barking, whom he beat in the 1987 final, on Thursday, while Gary Smith, the 1988 champion from Beckenham, scored only three shots against Mervyn King yesterday.

Richard Sampson was beaten by Paul Bennett, of Bodmin. Les Gillett, the International Open champion and England reserve, lost to Andrew Friend, of Ipswich, and Nick Brett, the national junior champion, was defeated by Jamie Mills, of South Forest.

Nigel Smith, 33, took the bowls world by storm in 1984, when, while still a teenager, he defeated David Bryant in the semi-finals of the world indoor singles championship at Coatbridge, before losing narrowly to Jim Baker, of Ireland, in the final.

"Whatever happened to Nigel Smith?" bowls followers often ask, because he seemed to have disappeared. In fact, he has toiled hard at club and county level, reached the England final in 1987 and made it into the England team in 1990.

His victory over Allcock was more convincing than the 21-14 scoreline suggests, as he led 20-9 before Allcock saved face with a flurry of shots. Smith went on to book a place in the quarter-finals with a 21-15 win over Duncan Christie, of Reading.

The biggest surprise, however, was King's second-round, 21-15 defeat at the hands of Keith Henderson, a retired joiner from Hexham, who was, at 60, the oldest player in the field by at least 20 years. Barely two months ago, King, listed No 3 in the world professional rankings, was runner-up in the world indoor singles championship at Preston.

ICE SKATING

Exciting Eldredge finds silver lining

From Angela Court in Minneapolis

ALTHOUGH Alexei Yagudin, 18, of Russia, became the youngest winner of the men's world figure skating championship since 1963 here, the night belonged to Todd Eldredge, of the United States.

In front of a patriotic crowd on Thursday, Eldredge took to the ice for the free programme lying fourth, knowing that it was almost impossible to win after faltering on his combination jump in the short programme on Wednesday. His performance was not about going for gold but restoring pride.

A fall on the opening quad jump must have been unsettling, but from then on he seemed to be inspired. Seven triple jumps, including two axels, followed and, by the end, the audience was on its feet in appreciation. Marks of up to 5.9 for presentation gave Eldredge first place in the free section and the silver medal.

Yagudin, who led after the short programme, also landed seven triple jumps, but doubled a planned quad and singled a triple toe loop. His overall performance lacked the drive of Eldredge, but second place in this section was enough for the title. "I was lucky," Yagudin said later. "I didn't skate my best."

Yagudin's compatriot, Evgeni Plushenko, 15, took the bronze after falling three times in the first two minutes of his free programme.

Steven Cousins, of Great Britain, finished sixth in the free programme, but was unable to advance from seventh place overall. To music from *Gone With the Wind*, he began strongly with a triple lutz, but fell on a triple axel. He managed the jump successfully later and added a further five triples.

Cousins said that he had been suffering from a pinched groin nerve for a week and, at times, had found it painful to walk, let alone skate.

This being his most successful season to date, Cousins said that he would not make a decision about staying in eligible competition for at least three months. "At this stage I don't know what I will do," he said. "I have to weigh up all the options carefully."

CYCLING

Bartoli favoured to assume leadership

MICHELE BARTOLI, of Italy, the World Cup winner last year, starts the 1998 second round, the Tour of Flanders, tomorrow as favourite to take over the series leadership from Erik Zabel, of Germany, the winner two weeks ago of the Milan-San Remo race (Jeremy Whittle writes).

Zabel will be absent from the Belgian classic but Bartoli expects strong opposition from Johan Museeuw, of Belgium, a former world champion now hitting peak form.

Museeuw's Mapei team will also be able to look to Frank Vandenbroucke, winner of the Paris-Nice race in March. Vandenbroucke fell heavily in the Milan-San Remo race, damaging his suspect right knee, but has made a surprisingly quick recovery.

Museeuw, 32, who wore the world champion's jersey in 1997, had been written off by the Belgian media until a spate of recent wins bought him back into contention.

"I am more relaxed this year," he said, "and I'm getting to my best form at the right time."

□ Colin Sturgess, of Britain, a former world pursuit champion who has lived in Australia for the past four years, has returned to England and joined the newly-formed Team Brite. He has his first race today in the St Ives ten-mile trial near St Neots.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Monarchs set to find new realm

By Richard Wetherell

THERE have been many changes to the World League of American Football (WLAF) since Barcelona won the World Bowl last June, not least its name. When Rhein and Amsterdam kick-off the 200th game today it will be in the NFL Europe League. The aim, the league claims, is to create a stronger link between the competition in North America and its primary international vehicle.

The name may have changed but the six teams are almost the same. The London Monarchs, who made Stamford Bridge their home last year, are no more. Instead the England Monarchs will play three games at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre (the first of which is tomorrow), and one game each at Bristol City FC's Ashton Gate and the Alexander Stadium, Birmingham. It is a far cry from that glorious June evening in 1991 when the Monarchs won the inaugural World Bowl in front of 61,108 spectators at Wembley. The three new grounds, with capacities of 14,000, 18,000 and 22,000, could not cope with such a crowd between them.

The Scottish Claymores are also on the move, leaving Murrayfield, in Edinburgh, to play a home game in Glasgow at Partick Thistle's Firhill Stadium. The teams' uniforms have been simplified to a more traditional American style and the play-off format now ensures that the top two teams go to the World Bowl in Frankfurt on June 14.

Not all of the changes have been welcomed, especially by Monarchs supporters. "It has been a torrid off-season," Alton Byrd, the Monarchs' general manager, said. "We have made some fundamental branding and ethos changes about American football in the UK."He admits that "this is a key season for the franchise" but believes tomorrow we will see "the new Monarchs, a new era and I believe we are on the right street".

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CHANGING TIMES

RUGBY LEAGUE: TITLE ASPIRANTS ALREADY CASTING NERVOUS GLANCES IN DIRECTION OF CENTRAL PARK

Wigan have rivals running scared

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE



Cowie, the experienced front-row man, comes into the Wigan Warriors side to face Castleford Tigers tomorrow in their Super League opener

AFTER their first round of matches this afternoon, Super League clubs will tune into the televised encounter at Central Park to see whether their worst suspicions are confirmed, and that the revival of the Wigan Warriors is not some mirage.

Castleford Tigers, their opponents, are among several notably improved sides with pretensions to make the top-five play-offs at the end of the normal league campaign, but who are cast in the sacrificial role tomorrow night.

For Wigan, the versatile Lee Gilmour comes in on the wing for Mark Bell, who tweaked a hamstring in the Challenge Cup semi-final defeat of London Broncos, and Neil Cowie replaces Stephen Holgate in the front row. Barrie-Jon Mather, the Castleford centre, has recovered from concussion to face his former club.

London have virtually completed the deal taking Tulsen Tollett back from Harlequins and rugby union. A rematch tomorrow with Halifax at the Stoop Memorial Ground of a recent ill-tempered Challenge Cup tie, which the Blue Sox felt they lost because of poor refereeing decisions, promises to be another close affair.

John Hamilton, 18, replaces the injured Keiron Cunningham as hooker at St Helens for his debut at Salford Reds, for whom Phil Hassan, surprisingly released by Leeds Rhinos, will make his first appearance on the wing after being cup-tied.

Leeds introduce Brad Godden, signed by Graham Murray, the coach, from his former club, Hunter Mariners, for their first competitive match since an early cup exit nearly two months ago. Warrington Wolves face the possible backlash at Headingley, with Adam Fogerty restored to the front row after a succession of injuries.

Newly-promoted Hull Sharks hope to replace the suspended Jason Temu with Hitro Okesene, another New Zealand forward, who was due to arrive yesterday, for the visit of Sheffield Eagles. The Challenge Cup finalists have injury doubts over Darren Turner and Rod Doyle, both forwards.

Hull's first Super League match has been overshadowed by the backroom upheavals associated with an initial walkout by David Lloyd, the Sharks chairman and British Davis Cup tennis captain, who has subsequently taken ownership of the players and loaned them to the club for a rental fee.

At a time when Hull should have been the good-news story of rugby league, in a city where enthusiasm for the game is boundless, the club has been consumed by tension between Lloyd and a group of shareholders led by Roy Waudby, the former chairman, who fiercely objected to a proposal by Lloyd to convert his £500,000 loan into share capital.

When Lloyd stormed out of the annual meeting last week, he threatened to call in his loan, which would have left the club insolvent.

However, after meeting Lloyd, Alan Hunte, the new captain, endorsed the players' commitment to the chairman. "The players have chatted with David Lloyd to clarify where the club is going. The apparent problems have been a storm in a teacup. People outside the club have been making a big deal out of what's been happening, but we're 100 per cent behind David and he's 100 per cent behind us," Hunte said.

"Some spectators have obviously been worried, particularly when they thought that all the players were being transfer-listed. They want success and they don't want to see the club harmed, but no one will be leaving."

A further incentive for Hull to do well comes from across the city. Hull Kingston Rovers, in administration for more than a year, have shrugged off their financial uncertainty and are unbeaten in six matches at the top of the first division. It is a record they hope to maintain away at Swinton Lions, for whom Ian Blease will make his debut, 11 months after he was banned for assaulting a touch-judge in a reserve match for Salford.

One Hull player about to leave, temporarily, is Mark Hewitt, who is joining Widnes Vikings on loan.

BASKETBALL

Final-day drama rests on Bullets

AS BIRMINGHAM Bullets stepped onto court in the National Exhibition Centre to do battle with Manchester Giants last night, they carried not only the hopes of their own supporters but of neutrals everywhere (Nicholas Harling writes).

The last thing that anyone but Leopards' supporters wanted to see was another anti-climatic end to the Budwieser League title race.

Twelve months ago, the drama petered out before the last set of matches in the regular season because Tony Holley sank a late basket for Thames Valley Tigers, giving them a surprise victory over Sheffield Sharks, who could not then catch the Leopards.

Even though the Tigers are again not involved themselves in the final countdown, Holley has once more proved a key figure in the trophy's destiny. The scorer of the opening basket for the Tigers in their penultimate match — against the Leopards, in the London Arena on Thursday — he finished with 22 points.

But it was not quite good enough to prevent the Leopards gaining a 97-92 win, which took them to within one more victory of the first successful defence of the title since Kingston's third and last triumph in 1992.

Once it was certain that Holley would finish among the losing squad, the race for the title was set to continue until tomorrow's last day — providing that the Bullets beat the Giants last night.

HOCKEY: EXPERIENCE OF LEAGUE CHAMPIONS PRESENTS TOUGH TASK FOR BEESTON IN FINAL

Class should prevail as Cannock seek double

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

WITH the league championship already in their hands, Cannock have their sights on a double triumph as they take on Beeston in the EHA Cup final at Milton Keynes tomorrow, when a hectic domestic season will come to an end.

The first all-Midlands final is made all the more exceptional by the fact that the champions are challenged by a side that recently escaped relegation. However, Beeston have been outstanding in the past six weeks.

Cannock have a wealth of international talent, though two of their most dangerous forwards are not fully fit. Crutchley will be on the bench, coming into action only to strike the corners, and Mayer has a knee injury but is likely to play. Both have been left out of the England team for the World Cup in Holland next month.

In midfield, Cannock can draw heavily on the experienced trio of Pidcock, Kalbir Takher and Sharpe, and Edwards and Parnham are among the best deep defenders in the country. Pidcock and Sharpe are in the World Cup squad but Lewis must wait until April 27 to find out whether he or Lukes, of East Grinstead, will go as second-choice goalkeeper.

Against all this, Beeston seem to drift into insignificance, but they do have a fair proportion of talent. Keegan has often restored their fortunes with goals from short corners and open play, and Huckle, Sheardown and Randall have done their share of scoring. West, a bright young prospect, was recently with the England Under-18 team in Dublin.

Graham Griffiths, the Beeston manager, said: "We have had a tremendous second half of the season and we are confident. We recognise that Cannock are the most complete side in the country but we are optimistic about our chances. We have had some tremendous support this season and we intend to give the spectators something to shout about."

With Cannock winning the league and qualifying for the European club championship, Beeston are already assured of a place in next season's European Cup Winners' Cup.



Shayne Andrews, of Peterborough Town, in action in a 3-2 inter-league play-off defeat by Eastcote yesterday

GOLF: WESTWOOD STRUGGLES ON THE GREENS AS WOOSNAM SUFFERS BACK SPASMS IN CLASSIC

Day defies his reputation to take early lead

GLEN DAY, of the United States, has earned himself such a reputation as a slow golfer that his nickname on the US Tour is "All Day". But he appears to have found a way of speeding up — by taking fewer shots.

Last week Day, a former European tour player, had the best week of his career, finishing joint runner-up in the Players Championship in Florida and earning about £130,000, more than he collected all last season.

Yesterday he took a two-stroke lead into the second round of the Freeport-McDermott Classic in New Orleans, a tournament he has to win to qualify for the Masters at Augusta next week.

After his opening 64, eight under par, he said: "If somebody figures out why I've suddenly started playing this well I wish they'd tell me."

Nine Europeans are playing and the least known of them did the best in the first round at English Turn. Niclas Fasth, of Sweden, who won a US Tour card at their qualifying school, lies joint fourth after a 67.

Lee Westwood, of England, one of the favourites after his fifth place finish in the Players Championship, resumed on three under, and Ian Woosnam, of Wales, and Richard Coughlan, of Ireland, on two under.

Westwood said of his opening 69: "I played great, but holed only one decent putt — a 20-footer for par. I'm giving myself lots of chances, which is good, but something is wrong on the greens and I'm going to try to sort it out."

Woosnam is still suffering the same back spasms that forced his withdrawal after 30 holes last week, but missed only one fairway and said: "That was pretty good really and I'll take that score for starters. The spasms come on the practice range and I get really stiff, but at least it's easing off when I get walking on the course."

Coughlan, the former Walker Cup amateur, was four under with five to play, but bogeyed the difficult 14th and even more difficult 18th.

"I'm hitting it well," said the 23 year-old from Tullamore. "It's disheartening when you tee off and you're already eight behind the leader, but I like the greens and my new caddie is great. He stays on an even keel, whereas the one before got too excited or too down. That didn't do anything for me."

CRICKET

Knight sets his sights on true test

FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN ST VINCENT

NICK KNIGHT can count himself fortunate. Since his England career began in 1995 there have been sufficient memorable innings to gloss over the times when he has been less successful.

A Test century against Pakistan at Headingley in 1996 was swiftly followed by back-to-back centuries in the one-day internationals against the same opposition. Months later he led the heroic assault on a target of 205 in 37 overs against Zimbabwe in Bulawayo, only to be run out off the last ball of the match trying to complete the run that would have taken England to victory. In the past week the Warwickshire left-hander has won both man-of-the-match awards in the Caribbean with scores of 122 and 90 in the opening limited overs internationals against West Indies.

Yet as he prepared for the two one-day games on St Vincent this weekend, Knight, 29, was acutely aware that the England selectors still hold deep reservations about his technique.

"I'm not getting carried away," he said. "I try to be philosophical about playing at the highest level. Sometimes things don't work out and that's when you have to work hardest. Bowlers get to know you and you have to be constantly updating your technique to cope."

His acknowledged weakness is scoring too many of his runs in the area between backward point and third man. In one-day cricket it is a large gap that can often be exploited. In the five-day game, however, when there is a full slip and gully cordon in place, it has often been the source of his downfall.

Relegated to winter duties captaining the England A team while the selectors showed their preference for Mark Butcher, of Surrey, Knight sought to eradicate the fault.

Before joining the one-day squad in the Caribbean he had four private practice sessions with Graham Gooch, who was his captain at Essex before his move to Edgbaston in 1995. It was the most direct way of informing one of the selectors of his determination to fight his way back into Test contention.

Having established an opening partnership with Alec Stewart that could keep Michael Atherton out of the one-day reckoning right through to the World Cup next year, Knight has also set his sights on the former captain's Test place in the summer against South Africa.

He said: "I don't want to be labelled just a one-day player — I want to be involved in every England side but I have to accept that I've got to be more consistent. I'm not happy with my Test average of 30. There has been a 100, 90s and 80s but a lot of low scores as well."

West Indies have made three changes to their squad.



Knight: philosophical

Courtney Walsh has pulled out to start preparing for the new season with Gloucestershire, Shivnarine Chanderpaul has flu and Franklyn Rose, the fast bowler who was named yesterday as the replacement for the injured Paul Reiffel as Northamptonshire's overseas player this season, has been dropped. Their places have been taken by Keith Arthurton, Carl Tuckett and Nixon McLean.

ENGLAND (probable): N V Knight, A J Stewart, B C Hollioake, G A Hick, M R Ramprakash, A J Hollioake, M A Ealham, D R Brown, M V Fleming, R D B Croft, A R C Fraser.

WEST INDIES (from): C B Lambert, P V Wallace, B C Lara, C L Hooper, S C Williams, K L T Arthurton, P V Simmons, R D Jacobs, N A M McLean, C E L Ambrose, M V Dillon, R Lewis, C Tuckett.

Diary, page 22

Wisden laments end of chivalry

Simon Wilde pans for nuggets in the 135th edition of cricket's bible

It appears now to be traditional that the arrival on the bookshelves of *Wisden's* famous yellow jacket is the cause for a kerfuffle. Last year it was over the Editor's assertion that cricket in England was widely perceived as "elitist, exclusionist and dull". This year's hot topic — partly by design and partly happenstance — is fair play, or the lack of it, in a game once famed for its decency.

As well as appreciations of the late Denis Compton and, 150 years after his birth, of W. G. Grace, the 135th edition contains an article announcing "The End of Chivalry".

The latter, written by Andrew Longmore, uses as its pegs the breakdown in sporting relations between Marlborough and Radley, the shoving match between Robert Croft and Mark Ilott in a NatWest Trophy semi-final, and Nasser Hussain's plea for more nastiness in the English game. On such gloomy evidence, it is hard to disagree with the author's conclusion.

Compton would have had no truck with such shenanigans. He played as a Corinthian, not through any bogus ideal, but because he found the game fun and wanted everyone to enjoy it. Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge writes of Compo's modesty and his gift for making those who played alongside him feel better. Frank Keating's essay confirms that the feel-good factor extended to spectators, too.

One suspects that Compton would not have had much time for Grace, whom he would probably have relished running out. To describe what Geoffrey Moorhouse writes as an "appreciation" might be stretching a point. He clearly cannot stand the man, having turned against him in adolescence, "when I discovered that he was sometimes a shameless cheat in a game that I was being asked to believe was wholly honourable".

Before we get this far, Matthew Engel has opened the innings with his usual thought-provoking Editor's notes, which include a call for cricket's world governing body to investigate the mounting number of claims of match-fixing.

If decency was intended to be the theme, the Editor's choice of five cricketers of the year may raise a few eyebrows. The list contains two Englishmen, Matthew Maynard and Graham Thorpe, and three Australians, Matthew Elliott, Stuart Law and Glenn McGrath.

This annual award of laurels never meets with universal agreement and the Australia selectors have already given their verdict by dropping Elliott for a tour of India. But it is Law's selection that is the controversial one. As Greg Baum's portrait makes clear, Law is an "unashamed sledger" and well known as such in Sheffield Shield and county cricket.

Law has played only one Test and the talk is that the selectors do not like him. Longmore's article implies that chivalry died at the hands of over-competitive foreigners. But could it be that the Australians do not want Law precisely because of his bad-mouthing? Heaven forfend.

Wisden Cricketers' Almanack 1998, *published by John Wisden and Co Ltd, £27.50 cased or soft cover.*

GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Buckingham v Potton; Cogenhoe v St Neots; Eynesbury v Spalding; Ford Sports v Wellingborough; Kempston v Holbeach; Long Buckby v Boston; Mirrlees Blackstone v Wootton; Northampton Spencer v Bourne; Stotfold v Stamford; Yaxley v Desborough.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Arundel v Ringmer; Burgess Hill v Selsey; Eastbourne Town v Redhill; Hailsham v Peacehaven and Telscombe; Horsham YMCA v Portfield; Langney Sports v Littlehampton; Mile Oak v Saltdean; Pagham v Shoreham; Whitehawk v Chichester; Wick v Hassocks.

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Halesowen H v Bloxwich Town; Kings Norton v Barwell; Knypersley V v Stratford T; Oldbury v Bridgnorth; Rocester v Boldmere St M; Rushall O v Stapenhill; Shifnal T v Pelsall V; W Mid Police v Wednesfield; Willenhall v Sandwell.

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Brigg Town v Arnold; Curzon Ashton v Ossett Albion; Eccleshill v Pickering; Glasshoughton Welfare v Armthorpe Welfare; Hallam v Thackley; Hatfield Main v Pontefract Cols; Hucknall Town v North Ferriby; Liversedge v Denaby; Maltby MW v Sheffield; Ossett Town v Selby

FA PREMIER YOUTH LEAGUE: Arsenal v Sunderland (10.45), Chelsea v Sheffield Wednesday (11.0); Crystal Palace v Leeds (11.0); Queens Park Rangers v Derby (11.0); Southampton v Middlesbrough (11.0); Tottenham v Nottingham Forest (11.0); West Ham v Barnsley (11.0); Wimbledon v Coventry (11.0).

BASS IRISH CUP: Semi-final: Glenavon v Linfield (at Windsor Park, 11.0)

AFA SENIOR CUP: Final: Old Aloysians v Old Finchleans

ARTHURIAN LEAGUE: Arthur Dunn Cup: Final: Brentwoods v Foresters Premier division: Saloplans v Lancing

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Five Nations Championship

England v Ireland (at Twickenham, 2.0) .....

Allied Dunbar Premiership
Second division

Fylde v Moseley .....

Jewson National League
First division

Otley v Harrogate .....

Rugby v Lydney .....

Second division north

Birmingham/Solihull v Aspatria .....

Kendal v Walsall .....

Manchester v Sheffield .....

Preston Grasshoppers v Sandal .....

Sedgley Park v Nuneaton .....

Stourbridge v Lichfield .....

Wirmington Park v Hinckley .....

Second division south

Bridgwater v Metropolitan Police .....

Camberley v Barking .....

Clifton v Plymouth (12.30) .....

Havant v Tabard .....

North Walsham v Henley .....

Redruth v Esher .....

THWAITES NORTH: First division: Broughton Park v Macclesfield, Hull Ionians v Middlesbrough; New Brighton v Bridlington, Stockton v Widnes; Tynedale v West Park Bramhope; Wigton v Doncaster.

SOUTH WEST: First division: Barnstaple v Berry Hill, Gloucester Old Boys v Penzance and Newlyn, Maidenhead v Matson; St Ives v Launceston; Stroud v High Wycombe, Torquay v Bracknell.

Welsh League
First division

Abertillery v Aberavon (2.30) .....

Llandovery v Caerphilly (2.30) .....

Newbridge v Treorchy (2.30) .....

Rumney v Blackwood (2.30) .....

SECOND DIVISION: Whitland v Narberth (2.30)

Tennents Velvet Cup
Quarter-finals

Hawick v Boroughmuir .....

Kelso v Melrose .....

Stirling County v Currie .....

Watsonians v Glasgow Hawks .....

TENNENTS VELVET BOWL: Quarter-finals: Helensburgh v Camoustie HSFP; Morgan Acad FP v Ross High; Perthshire v Cambuslang; Strathmore v Cartha QP

TENNENTS VELVET SHIELD: Quarter-finals: Barwick v Stewart's Melville FP; Cumnock v Ayr; Selkirk v Hutchesons' Aloysian, Stewartry v Alloa.

Tennents Premiership
Division 3B

Glenrothes v Glasgow Southern ..... P

CLUB MATCHES: Dunvant v Llanelli (2.30), London Welsh v Newport (1.0); Maesteg v Bridgend (2.30); Nottingham v Wakefield; Waterloo v Wanderers.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Kick-off 2.30

NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE: Premier division: Leigh Miners v Egremont; Whitley Central v Askam; West Hull v Saddleworth; Wigan St Patrick's v Oldham St Anne's, Woolston v Dudley Hill. First division: Barrow Island v Eastmoor; Milford v Moldgreen; Oulton v East Leeds; Wigan St Jude's v Skirlaugh. Second division: Dewsbury Moor v Crosfields; Eccles v Hull Dockers; Featherstone Amateur v New Earswick; Ovenden v Siddal.

HOCKEY

INTER-LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS: Pool A: Robinsons v Eastcote (12.0). Pool B: Norton v Oxford Hawks (2.0) (both at Milton Keynes).

VINTAGE CUP: Final: Eastcote v St Albans (10.0). Veterans Cup: Final: Bournville v Indian Gym (4.0) (both at Milton Keynes)

WOMEN'S REGIONAL LEAGUES: East: Bury St Edmunds v St Albans; Cambridge City v Dereham; Ipswich v Harleston; Sevenoaks v Ashford (Kent). South: Hampstead v Horsham; Reading v Winchmore Hill; Southampton v Maidenhead; Tulse Hill v Dulwich, Winchester v Hendon. West: Cheltenham v Leominster; Codwall v St Austell; Exeter v Yate; Exmouth v Redland; Taunton Vale v Bournemouth.

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Crystal Palace v Worthing Bears (7.30), Derby Storm v Newcastle Eagles (7.30); Leicester Riders v Chester Jets (7.30); Watford Royals v Thames Valley Tigers (7.30)

BOWLS: EIBA national championship finals (in Melton Mowbray).

SNOOKER: British Open (at Plymouth Pavilions).

SPEEDWAY: Elite League: Eastbourne v Coventry (7.30). British Under-21 championship: semi-finals (at Berwick, 7.0)

SQUASH: British Open (at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham).

TENNIS: Davis Cup: Euro/African zone: Group one: Second round: Great Britain v Ukraine (in Newcastle).

TOMORROW

RUGBY UNION

Five Nations Championship

Wales v France (at Wembley, 3.0) .....

Jewson National League
Second division south

Weston-super-Mare v Cheltenham (3.0)

RUGBY LEAGUE

JJB Sports Super League

Leeds v Warrington (3.0) .....

London v Halifax (3.0) .....

Salford v St Helens (3.0) .....

Sheffield v Hull (3.15) .....

Wigan v Castleford (7.15) .....

First division

Featherstone v Leigh (3.30) .....

Hunslet v Whitehaven (3.30) .....

Swinton v Hull KR (3.0) .....

Wakefield v Rochdale (3.30) .....

Widnes v Dewsbury (3.0) .....

HOCKEY

EHA CUP: Final: Cannock v Beeston (at Milton Keynes, 4.15).

EHA TROPHY: Final: West Herts v Bowdon (at Milton Keynes, 2.0).

INTER-LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS: Pool A: Peterborough v Robinsons (10.0). Pool B: Harborne v Norton (12.0) (both at Milton Keynes)

EHA WOMEN'S CUP: Quarter-finals: Clifton v Trojans (at Beggar Bush, 1.0), Doncaster v Slough (at Bennetthorpe, 10.30); Highfrown v Sutton Coldfield (at Formby CC, 12.0), Loughborough Students v Aldridge (2.30).

EHA WOMEN'S PLATE: Quarter-finals: Cambridge City v Maidenhead (2.0); Deeside R v Lansdown (2.0); North Staffordshire v Dulwich (1.30); Reading v Havant (2.0).

WOMEN'S CLUB MATCH: Chelmsford v St Albans (centenary match, 1.0)

OTHER SPORT

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Europe League: England Monarchs v Frankfurt Galaxy (at Crystal Palace, 3.0); Barcelona Dragons v Scottish Claymores (6.0).

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Chester Jets v Crystal Palace (4.0); Sheffield Sharks v London Leopards (2.0), London Towers v Birmingham Bullets (2.0).

BOWLS: Liberty Trophy: Final: Durham v Hampshire (in Melton Mowbray); Scottish team championship final (in Dundee).

CYCLING: Archer Grand Prix (108 miles, at Beaconsfield, 11.0).

SNOOKER: British Open (at Plymouth Pavilions).

SPEEDWAY: Premier League Cup: Glasgow v Newcastle (6.30), Newport v Peterborough (2.30)

SQUASH: British Open (at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham).

TENNIS: Davis Cup: Euro/African zone: Group one: Second round: Great Britain v Ukraine (in Newcastle).

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UK Equity Safeguard	112.97	120.01†	+ 0.82	2.02
On MAY to Mar 20	110.61	110.61	...	...
US Equ Safeguard	9557.00	#101.48	+157.00	...
Cash	957.99	961.88	– 0.00	5.75
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	432.26	458.10	+11.60	1.48
UK Small Cos	95.05	101.65	+ 1.19	0.50
FTSE 250 Index	114.57	122.47	+ 0.73	1.85
Govett UK Index	2850.70	3009.44†	+ 7.00	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	84.64	87.76	– 0.39	6.56
Monthly Inc	46.00	49.11†	– 0.21	7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	334.00	354.30	+ 7.16	...
American Smlr	245.31	262.25	+ 3.49	...
JG US Index	2669.36	2812.53	+74.08	4.00
European Gen	486.10	492.10	+17.26	0.05
European Smlr	171.77	183.18	+ 4.02	...
Japan Gen	97.17	103.00	– 4.60	...
Asia Pacific	84.85	90.20	– 1.60	1.09
Pacific Smlr	108.19	107.14	– 4.80	...
Emerg China	108.86	218.53	– 11.36	...
Latin America	108.37	115.90	+ 2.44	0.11
Inv Growth	183.71	196.47	+ 2.44	1.77
Balanced Exempt	177.50	184.60	...	...
Global Strategy	49.90	53.36	+ 0.99	...

AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS
01303 850 231

General Acc	987.10	1050.00	+11.00	2.17
General Inc	900.20	951.20	+ 8.50	2.17
UK Growth Acc	678.20	721.40	+ 8.20	2.15
UK Growth Inc	428.70	456.00	+ 5.26	2.15
Higher Inc Acc #	1251.00	1332.00	+18.00	4.91
Higher Inc Inc #	937.20	999.10	+ 9.10	4.91
Gilts/Fixed Int Acc	748.50	794.00	+ 2.00	5.56
Gilts/Fixed Int Inc	97.73	103.20	+ 0.80	5.56
Ailb America	485.50	516.40	+ 15.90	...
Europe	571.80	608.20	+ 16.30	0.46
Brit Excell	134.70	143.20	+ 1.40	2.62
Brit Fratmats Acc	169.70	180.50	+ 1.80	3.01
Brit Fratmats Inc	107.30	114.10	+ 1.20	3.01
Global Opps	134.80	143.10	+ 2.50	0.22
Balanced Acc	82.73	88.01	+ 0.65	2.11
Balanced Inc	75.01	79.79	+ 0.14	2.11
Japan Acc	31.78	33.27	– 1.97	...
Pac Basin Acc	358.65	307.00	– 13.50	2.18

ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS
03457 717 373

Gilts & Fixed Int	147.60	156.80†	+ 1.70	5.70
High Inc Equity	252.30	269.80†	+ 3.10	3.74
Worldwide Bond	369.40	385.70†	+ 3.10	3.51
American Growth	595.10	635.40†	+15.50	0.20
Asian Pacific	224.70	240.30	+ 9.90	0.57
Assets & Earnings	405.40	433.60	+ 5.30	2.36
Euro Capital Acc	297.60	318.50	+11.40	2.63
Euro Inc	44.56	47.44†	+ 0.84	8.77
General	367.90	391.40†	+ 5.90	2.51
Global Opps	89.72	91.19	+ 0.74	0.35
Japan	72.43	77.47	– 3.88	...
Managed Inc	56.92	60.56†	+ 0.63	4.21
Mastertrust	207.60	222.00	+ 1.90	1.00
US Emerging Cos	247.90	265.10	+ 9.30	...
Ethical	195.70	173.50	+ 2.10	1.51
International	159.10	169.90†	+ 1.40	2.62
Dividend & Growth	93.63	99.61†	+ 2.11	3.44
Global Gwth & Sec	80.32	85.66	+ 0.52	2.36
Latin America	81.14	86.32	+ 2.69	0.78
Capital Reserve	158.20	158.20	+ 0.80	4.47

ABBEY NATIONAL UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0141 275 8500
HELP UK Growth

Equity Income #	133.10	141.58	+ 2.10	1.41
Extra Income #	183.30	195.00	+ 3.30	4.26
Extra Income #	335.40	356.10	+ 3.30	4.26
Smaller Cos	111.90	119.00	+ 0.90	3.81
International	149.30	158.80	+ 2.70	0.75

ABERDEEN PROFLIC UT MGRS LTD
Enq: 0345 886 686 Dlg: 0800 833 580

Amer Opp Acc	#17.47	439.31	+ 8.31	...
Engy Mkts Inc	92.23	65.84	– 0.13	...
Ethical Inc	97.76	103.43	– 1.12	0.49
Euro Smlr Cos Acc	141.74	148.56	+ 3.45	...
Euro Spec Opps Acc	145.85	154.34	+ 1.32	...
Extra Inc Inc	252.16	265.14†	+ 1.24	3.61
Extra Inc Acc	345.50	363.21†	+ 1.71	3.61
FE Emg Econ	79.86	84.50	+ 3.59	0.78
Fixed Int Inc #	30.24	31.73	+ 0.21	7.45
Frontier Mk Inc	76.68	84.31	+ 0.89	...
Fund Of Inv Acc	221.11	238.97†	+ 3.19	7.19
Fund Of Inv Inc	478.05	506.48	+17.57	7.19
Gilt Inc Inc #	51.13	53.30†	+ 0.31	6.39
Global Bond Inc	40.66	42.45	+ 0.11	4.87
Global Inc Inc	34.03	35.83	+ 0.44	3.39
Global Inc Acc	52.29	55.06	+ 0.67	3.39
High Inc Inc	191.81	202.87	+ 0.73	3.38
High Inc Acc	254.53	269.36	+ 0.97	3.38
Japan Inc	137.60	145.59	+ 3.84	...
Latin Amer Inc	70.89	74.66	+ 1.82	...
Master Inc Inc	69.62	73.02†	+ 0.03	2.41
Master Equ Inc	53.92	57.53†	+ 0.26	0.21
North Amer Inc	288.23	306.47	+ 1.27	...
North Amer Acc	293.58	308.84	+ 1.77	...
Pacific Inc	96.38	98.53†	– 2.77	0.26
Prop Shares Inc	102.23	108.17	+ 1.51	0.86
Recovery Inc	119.65	126.60	+ 0.05	1.30
Recovery Acc	135.02	142.92	+ 0.06	1.30
Special Situs Inc	182.56	203.76	+ 0.24	0.79
Special Sit Acc	218.10	230.76	– 0.27	0.79
Tech Inc	687.65	693.73	+33.39	...
Tech Acc	687.65	693.73	+33.39	...
UK Blue Chip Inc	134.80	143.10	+ 1.17	2.22
UK Equity Inc	156.43	165.69	+ 1.41	2.22
UK Emg Co Inc	88.59	93.76	+ 0.05	0.70
UK Gwth Inc	80.00	84.26†	+ 1.17	0.91
World Port Inc #	161.30	167.19	+ 1.02	1.79

ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 220 0733

Uk Small Cos	2775.00	2885.00	+28.00	...

AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0171 256 5868

Resdtl Property #	108.60	115.50	– 0.76	5.59

ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD
01452 305 958

Amity Income	117.12	124.22†	– 0.03	1.59
Income Builder Inc	109.48	116.47	+ 1.55	2.62

B & C E UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
01250 895 911

Special Sit Fund	152.98	161.80	+ 3.20	...
Franklin Pensf Pens	90.79	94.32	+ 1.35	...

BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD
0131 222 4242

American Gth Cos	508.90	538.10	+29.00	...
Bond	123.80	130.19†	– 2.10	6.27
Brd Smlr Cos	121.80	128.60	+ 1.50	1.80
Europe	434.70	461.30	+12.80	...
Euro Smlr Cos	144.60	153.30	+ 2.10	0.26
High Income #	77.23	82.16	+ 0.62	4.88
Income	475.20	505.50†	+10.50	3.36
Japan	261.30	277.20	+ 5.20	...
Latin American	111.60	118.70	+ 3.40	...
Pacific	78.50	83.51	– 3.82	1.21
Uk Smlr Cos	72.25	76.84	+ 0.43	0.00
Japanese Sm Cos	440.10	453.80	–16.80	...
Mngd Fd	270.00	287.30†	+ 0.67	2.09

BANK OF IRELAND FUND MGRS LTD
0171 489 9873

Bnt & Dbnts	467.80	494.60	+ 2.00	0.70
Capital Dstr	199.50	211.00	+ 1.40	0.00
Weldn Opps	259.30	274.20	+ 1.40	0.00

BARCLAYS FUNDS LTD
Customer Help Desk: 0181 522 4000
Income Funds

Cash	100.10	100.10†	– 1.30	6.81
Cash Acc	133.30	133.30	+ 0.10	6.81
Income #	800.80	875.50	+18.30	3.36
Income Bullion #	93.07	98.12†	+ 1.57	3.99
Balanced Funds				
Exempt	126.70	134.80	+ 3.00	1.65
500	597.30	642.30†	+ 2.00	1.57
General	481.90	512.70†	+11.60	1.17
Property	273.10	283.10	+ 3.00	5.53
Trustee	334.30	355.60	+ 7.80	1.13
Growth Funds - Uk				
Capital	214.60	229.60	+ 5.10	1.09
FTSE 100	156.10	165.70	+ 4.40	1.36
Growth Acc	677.30	720.60	+19.50	1.12
Smaller Cos'	69.55	74.16	+ 0.16	1.85
Smaller Cos Acc	83.76	89.34	+ 0.19	1.85
Growth Funds - Overseas				
Americal	268.90	283.80	+ 8.60	...
American Growth	184.50	195.30	+ 5.10	...
Japan	86.80	91.53†	– 8.08	...
Japan Acc	87.75	92.66	– 8.22	...
Japan Spec Sits	40.26	42.62	– 3.57	...
Worldwide	243.20	258.00	+ 4.10	0.56
Barclays Investment Portfolios				
Managed Income	50.23	51.57†	+ 0.35	6.50
Mgd Gwth & Inc #	50.83	53.62†	+ 0.37	5
Managed Growth	53.26	56.48	+ 0.69	0.69
Barclays Global Investors Funds				
Berkeley 0800 731 2443				
Income Funds				
Distribution #	143.30	144.00†	+ 2.10	4.57
Equity Income #	197.10	210.50†	+ 0.40	3.53
Gt & Fix Int	64.73	67.03†	+ 0.44	6.72
Int Fxd Int	99.94	103.30	+ 0.80	5.63
Int Fxd Int Acc	129.50	133.80	+ 0.70	5.63
Growth Funds - Uk				
UF Growth	616.40	655.80	+14.20	1.16
Uk Growth Acc	616.40	655.80	+14.20	1.16
Growth & Inc	629.70	669.90	+15.50	1.15
Growth & Inc Acc	1363	1450	+34.00	1.15
Growth Funds - Overseas				
Euro Growth	295.40	312.60	+10.70	0.23
Euro Growth Acc	323.50	342.40	+11.70	0.23
Far Eastern Gwth	134.20	121.50	– 6.50	0.56
Far East Gth Acc	194.00	206.40	– 11.60	0.56

BARING FUND MANGERS LTD
0171 214 1004

American Growth	211.80	223.50	+ 7.20	...
Amer Smlr Cos	185.40	198.90	+ 4.90	...
Eastern	164.30	176.10	– 9.80	0.30
Equity Income #	141.20	150.30	+ 2.00	4.00
European Growth	518.60	557.00	+ 16.50	0.80
Europe	518.60	554.00	+ 16.50	0.80
German Growth	143.80	152.40	+ 6.80	0.50
Global Bond	74.92	78.81	+ 0.62	5.10
Global Growth	218.70	230.60	+ 5.60	0.10
Japan Growth	106.50	112.90	–10.30	...
Japan Sunrise	76.39	80.87	– 6.61	...
Korea Trust	26.78	28.80	– 4.10	...
Portfolio	201.70	214.60†	+ 3.70	1.80
–do- Accum	201.50	214.40†	+ 7.10	1.80
UK Growth	180.26	170.60	+ 2.30	1.00
UK Smaller Cos	152.90	165.20	+ 1.20	1.00
Select Managers	107.50	114.70	+ 1.30	1.00

BLACKSTONE FRANKS UT MGRS LTD
0171 250 3800

Inv Gwth Port Inc	112.50	119.70	+ 0.50	...
Special Oppor Inc	83.25	87.30	– 0.28	...

BRITANNIA FUND MGRS LTD
0141 228 6020

Balanced Growth	216.05	225.06†	+ 4.97	0.74
–do- Accum	256.35	267.03	+ 5.89	0.74
Smaller Cos	220.51	229.70	+ 1.52	0.35
–do- Accum	297.08	309.50†	+ 1.72	0.35
Higher Yield #	81.27	84.66†	+ 0.72	3.27
–do- Accum #	134.78	140.40	+ 2.75	3.27
American Gth Inc	162.34	158.69	+ 5.67	...
European Growth	248.41	258.78†	+11.65	...
–do- Accum	253.72	264.30	+11.90	...
Mngd Pfolio Inc	85.64	89.42†	+ 0.84	1.19
–do- Accum	70.17	73.09	+ 0.69	1.19
Int Specl Oppc	226.64	236.09	+ 8.08	...
Pacific Gwth	107.54	112.02	– 6.33	0.94
Uk General #	143.93	149.90	+ 5.46	2.47
–do- Accum #	160.51	167.19	+ 6.08	2.47
Japan	36.06	37.56	– 1.75	...
Gilt & Fixed Int #	112.30	116.97†	+ 0.74	7.36

BURRAGE UNIT TST MGMT LTD
0171 480 7216

Short Dated Gilt	64.68	65.52†	+ 0.37	6.38

C/S UNIT MANAGERS LTD
0161 837 5060

Gwkom	251.70	264.30	+ 5.30	1.17
Uk Growth	314.80	330.50	+ 6.10	1.11
UF Income	212.80	223.50†	– 1.60	3.05

CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD
01707 822 100

Can Gen Dist	315.90	334.80	+ 3.90	1.02
–do- Income Dist	179.50	190.20	+ 1.60	2.66
–do- Accum	605.60	641.90	+ 5.50	2.66
Gilt & Fxd Inc	44.68	46.94	+ 0.49	4.62
Growth Units	380.45	405.80†	+ 4.20	1.43
Bond	192.60	202.50†	+ 1.50	5.60
Intl Growth	261.20	277.50	+ 4.70	0.26
North American	377.60	400.40	+13.50	...
Far East	191.90	205.20	–10.30	1.00
UK Smaller Cos	312.30	334.00	+ 2.80	0.07
European	141.70	150.70	+ 4.00	0.43
Japanese Growth	38.68	39.48†	– 1.10	...

CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD
0161 831 7633 Enq 0161 831 7403 Dlg 0161 831 7455

American & Gen	326.10	346.20†	+ 5.60	...
European Inc	152.20	161.40	+ 1.20	0.10
Smaller Cos (4-1)	127.30	135.50†	+ 0.10	1.52
Growth	786.70	849.70†	+ 5.00	1.54
Income & Growth #	669.60	713.40	+ 5.00	3.76
–do- Accum #	1086.00	1134.10	+ 9.50	3.76
Japan & Gen	45.78	49.39†	– 1.73	...
Hillmarch Gwth	1668.00	1738.00†	+ 2.00	1.31
–do- Accum	2108.00	2199.00	+18.00	1.31
Special Sits	184.80	196.80	+ 1.30	1.50
High Yield	2188.00	2256.00	+19.00	2.22

CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD
0171 606 0708

Cazenove Portfolio	128.45	134.45	+ 0.82	2.18
American Portfolio	184.68	196.45	+ 2.44	0.41
European Portfolio	203.37	216.69†	+ 0.61	0.35
High Income	57.01	59.99	+ 0.52	6.30
Japanese Portfolio	43.45	45.97†	– 2.54	...
Pacific Portfolio	115.37	124.06	– 5.64	1.14
UK Equity	131.00	139.69†	+ 0.59	2.60
UK Equity & Bd	74.75	79.19	+ 0.23	4.66
UK Smlr Cos	62.05	66.39†	– 0.08	1.79

CBF CHURCH OF ENGLAND FUNDS
0171 588 1815

Ibr Fd Inc	1060.80	1076.84	+ 2.34	3.22
Ibr Fd Acc	1701.77	1118.43	+ 1.93	...
Fxd Int Sec Inc	147.83	148.51	+ 0.26	7.60
Fxd Int Sec Acc	162.92	163.66	+ 0.32	...

CDIF CHARITY FUNDS
0171 588 1815

Investment Inc	1027.40	1042.92	–10.96	3.54
Investment Acc	5098.33	5117.86	...	...
Fixed Int Inc	135.34	135.88	– 2.57	7.65
Fixed Int Acc	279.99	281.11	+ 0.11	...

CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD
0171 556 8800

Enclosure Inst	108.95	106.13	– 0.15	5.82
Ecca Bio-Tech	45.36	48.71	+ 0.84	...
Acorn Ethical Tst	233.80	248.72	+ 6.00	0.49
City Fin Assets	100.26	105.30	+ 0.14	2.51
City Fin Intl	95.55	102.05	+ 0.07	...
Triton Hse Cap	433.23	466.88	– 0.77	2.05
Buckley Hold Gntr	139.74	148.25	+ 1.48	...
Utilities Fd	94.10	96.17	+ 1.06	3.12

CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD
0171 711 6771 Admin: 01277 227 300
Emerging Markets

	54.05	54.16	– 0.51	...

CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD
0345 772 233

American Gwth	111.97	119.12	+ 1.00	...
Dragon Growth	43.28	46.02	+ 2.01	1.25
Equity High Inc	135.39	143.39†	+ 0.80	3.82
–do- Accum	205.36	217.31	+ 1.45	3.82
Extra Income Inc	29.20	30.75†	– 0.27	5.68
Extra Income Acc	34.79	36.67	– 0.11	5.68
European Gwth	101.25	107.14	+ 0.70	...
Exempt	48.10	42.88	+ 0.29	...
General Equity	156.13	164.78	+ 1.30	1.74
Japan Growth	38.08	31.98	– 1.56	...
Pacific Growth	98.65	104.09	– 1.05	1.22
Prof Snr Cos Inc	48.47	52.29	+ 0.32	1.07
–do- Accum	53.21	56.31	+ 0.36	1.07
Retirement Inc #	36.71	41.18	– 0.20	4.36
Special Sits	65.43	70.35	+ 0.45	1.90
UK & Overseas	76.64	81.19	+ 0.08	0.26

COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD
01634 898 000

Enhanced	92.15	95.98	+ 0.60	2.91
Capital	116.89	120.86	+ 0.86	1.61
High Income	58.06	60.48	+ 0.36	6.26
Top 50	87.77	91.42	+ 1.32	1.55

COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD
0181 686 9818
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)
Income Funds

Equity Inc	395.88	376.90†	– 4.23	3.66
Long Gilt	53.23	55.42†	+ 0.26–	4.77
Monthly Inc Plus	62.54	65.15†	+ 0.41	6.88
–do- Accum	77.09	80.31	+ 0.89	6.88
Preference Share	59.98	62.49†	– 1.14	6.24
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	183.12	190.77†	– 1.81	5.05
Managed Fund	98.82	97.74†	– 0.21	2.17
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	58.22	60.65†	– 0.47	1.40
–do- Accum	70.16	73.09†	– 0.91	1.40
UK & General	141.56	147.50†	– 1.11	1.55
–do- Accum	191.34	199.33†	+ 1.26	1.03
UK Growth	282.59	294.48†	+ 1.64	1.33
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	341.26	355.64†	+ 6.11	0.38
Far Eastern Gwth	51.44	55.26†	– 5.26	0.30
Global Bond	70.25	73.18†	– 1.17	5.24
Japan Growth	78.35	81.62†	– 5.53	...
North Amer Gwth	356.57	371.47†	+12.28	...
Oriental Growth	56.91	59.29†	– 2.85	0.82
Worldwide Growth	89.44	97.34†	+ 1.06	0.37
01489 CD TRUSTS (NON PPT FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	91.49	91.49†	– 2.36	6.81
Reinvestor Fund	114.68	122.01	+ 0.78	1.84

CONSISTENT UNIT TST MGMT CO LTD
0171 559 8880

Consistent UT	49.03	52.15	+ 0.44	2.47

COOKE (HENRY) INV FUNDS LTD
0800 085 358

Growth	229.80	243.10	+ 1.50	1.44
Income	88.67	105.98	+ 1.18	3.22
European Growth	115.40	122.63	+ 3.00	...
Recovery	245.10	260.80†	– 1.20	1.70

CO-OP PENSION FDS UT MGRS LTD
0171 283 9494

Equity Dist	1297.39	1418.10	+40.00	3.85

CREDIT SUISSE ASSET MGMT-FDS (UK) LTD
01277 699 370

European Inc	105.50	111.80	+ 3.80	0.28
Fd Flexibility Tst	140.30	149.20	+ 1.60	0.98
Income #	385.60	421.10	+ 5.20	3.50
–do- Accum #	1085.00	1184.00	+ 7.00	3.50
Smaller Cos	275.30	292.80	+ 2.20	0.53
–do- Accum	345.10	367.10	+ 2.80	0.53
Gth Portfolio	138.50	148.30	+ 1.70	1.09
Mthly Inc Port #	116.00	123.40	+ 1.20	3.16

DIMENSIONAL TST MGMT LTD
01771 677 6804

Global Stc Cos	1999.78	2008.70	– 4.50	0.47
UK Small Cos	2518.76	2623.26	– 7.88	3.57

DISCRETIONARY UNIT FUND MGRS
01771 677 6819

Disc Inc	296.20	305.40	+ 5.30	...

DRESDNER RCM FUNDS (UK) LTD
Dealine:0171 815 7354 Client Helpline:0800 317573
Formerly NDUT

Asian Smlr Cos	234.40	249.30	+19.70	...
Asian Growth	182.50	194.10	– 9.80	0.30
Bond Income	111.10	115.30†	+ 0.70	6.00
European	298.60	315.50	+ 7.40	0.40
European Priv	253.05	267.70	+ 6.30	0.70
European Special	203.80	216.60	+ 4.30	...
Gilt Yield	132.40	139.60†	+ 4.50	6.10
Global Eqty Inc	155.10	164.50†	+ 1.20	1.40
High Yield #	229.40	244.00†	+ 1.50	4.62
Japan	266.50	283.00	–10.20	...
Japanese Special	119.00	126.50	– 6.30	...
Money Market	104.11	104.11†	+ 0.10	6.00
North American	164.50	175.30	+ 5.40	...
Smaller Cos	166.30	176.40	+ 1.30	...
Tomorrows Co Ex	1393.00	1413.00	+31.00	0.10
UK Equity Growth	70.59	75.00	+ 0.75	0.60
UK Index Inc	483.70	496.10	+ 6.30	2.40
Wisdom Tst	1298.90	1378.60†		...
Global Income	275.30	292.60	+ 1.40	2.70
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European	508.20	532.00†	+12.00	0.30
European Bd	97.85	99.35	– 0.16	7.30
Gilt Inc	984.10	1023.10†	+ 8.10	1.80
Global Fin Mkts	78.38	82.07†	+ 0.11	0.30
Japan Tst	57.44	60.14	– 2.17	...
Little Dragons	71.96	75.36	– 5.24	...
Med-Terran Opp	457.50	473.30	+ 5.80	0.50
Oriental Income #	36.83	37.51†	– 1.16	3.50
Preference	155.40	162.70†	– 3.10	7.90
Tiger	186.70	196.50	–10.20	...
UK Blue Chip	122.40	128.10	+ 2.10	1.10
Uk Growth	948.50	991.40	+10.50	1.30
UK High Yield #	166.00	173.80†	+ 0.30	1.90
Uk Mid-Cap	471.60	493.80†	– 2.70	1.20
Uk Smlr Cos Div #	98.56	103.20	+ 1.08	5.50
Uk Smlr Cos	161.70	169.20†	+ 2.40	0.12

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High Dist #	256.80	272.80	+ 5.40	3.12
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Int Dis Inc	133.30	142.30†	+ 1.60	1.99
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Mgd Ethnl Port	110.80	115.80	– 0.10	0.68
Pacific	67.82	72.66	+ 2.88	...
Prof High Inc	27.88	29.42†	+ 0.02	6.12
Tokyo	136.40	144.30	+ 2.80	...
UK Smaller Cos	320.80	340.80	+ 2.80	1.09
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Income Trading	77.77	81.86	+ 1.57	2.13
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North American	218.31	229.80	+ 5.26	1.17
Pelican	200.80	220.84	+ 3.61	1.26
Smaller Cos	88.80	91.47	+ 0.71	1.79
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Income Funds				
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Amer Spec Sits	262.80	278.70	+ 7.80	...
Japan Smaller Cos	17.29	18.37	– 0.51	...
European	361.60	384.50



WORTH A WAIT 64

First-time buyer's home rises before decorators finish

WEEKEND MONEY

VICTORY AT LAST 61

City Mortgage Corporation is to be sold



Brown's way to cleaner motoring



Moves in the Budget to favour cleaner, greener and smaller cars were said to be just the first steps in a strategy to change the way we use cars. A £50 car tax cut for small cars may seem small beer to those used to a meaty four-litre V8 but such trends may be reinforced in the White Paper on integrated transport policy.

How the Government will introduce the differential tax rate, whether based simply on engine size or also take into account emission levels and economy, is not yet known. So how can someone buying a car now second-guess the Government's intentions? The best answers are not always the most obvious. For example, there is no point in thinking small unless you also look at a car's fuel consumption.

To find out how the Budget will affect our car-buying we asked experts at *Parker's Car Price Guide*, a book that helps motorists to find the best bargains. We profile four typical buyers and the type of car they would choose. The figures are for cars covering an average 10,000 miles-a-year, with date of registration and insurance group (IG).

ALAN COPPS

Cheap and cheerful for the campus

Buyer One is an 18-year-old girl student who has just passed her test and wants a first car ready for university in September. She will need it for mobility around campus, social life and to drive home maybe three times a term. Her parents have promised up to £3,000 to buy it, but running costs will have to come from her student income, so cheaper insurance and a possible £50 saving on car tax matter.

At £3,000 there are plenty of thrifty low-insurance cars, says *Parker's*. The Micra may not be trendy but is reliable and cheap to run. The Mini is more style-conscious, but thirstier; the Cinquecento has the advantages of both.

Best buy: Fiat Cinquecento 900 (94L) : Insurance Group 2, 46.3 mpg. Also consider: Nissan Micra 1.0 L (93L) : IG 3, 47.1 mpg; Rover Mini Sprite 1.3 (94M) : IG 3-4, 43 mpg.



Sporty budget hatchbacks

Buyer Two was looking for a new or very recent model. A single man, aged 25, working in financial services in Norwich, he has saved a £2,000 deposit and is willing to pay £150 a month on finance. Very image-conscious, he wants a hatchback or saloon to use for work but with a sporty touch.



However, he is well aware that some hot hatches carry a high insurance premium and is very keen to get value for money.

His budget is effectively £9,000, (typical finance at 12-13 per cent APR on a £7,000 loan, repayments over five years, is £150 a month, says *Parker's*). But at that price he is unlikely to get anything sporty new, except a Fiat Cinquecento Sporting (£7,510) and the Seat Arosa 1.4 Mpi (£8,195).

Rather than compromise on size and performance, he's better off going for nearly-new. The cars below are sporty enough to be fun but not so "hot" that they attract high insurance premiums. Best choice: Fiat Punto Sporting 1.2 16v (97P) : IG 7-8, 40 mpg. Also consider: Vauxhall Corsa 1.4i 16v Sport (97P) : IG 6, 38.2 mpg; Seat Ibiza 1.6 SXE (97P) : IG 6-7, 34.4 mpg; Nissan Almera 1.6 16v SRi 3-door (96P) : IG 6, 38.7 mpg.

Space, not image, for the family man

Buyer Three we thought would be firmly in the used car market. A young married couple, living in Nottingham with one two-year-old child and planning another, their absolute maximum is £5,000.

They want cheap basic transport, low running costs are essential and every £50 counts in the family budget. But it must be a four or five-door car for ease of loading the children in the back. Not at all image-conscious, they seem a classic case for a second-hand Escort or Astra.

A five-door supermini would not be big enough, but, said *Parker's*, going up to Escort-class will probably put them out of the lower road tax band.

Since image isn't an issue, they should be delighted with the almost new Skoda Felicia estate — well built, superb value and economical.

Best choice: Skoda Felicia 1.3 LXi estate (96P) : IG 4, 40.9 mpg.Well worth considering: Fiat Tipo 1.4 ie S hatchback (95N) : IG 8-9, 38.6 mpg; Ford Escort 1.4 L Cfi hatch/estate (94M) : IG 6, 31-35 mpg; Vauxhall Astra 1.4i Merit hatch/estate (94L) : IG 6 35-37 mpg; Citroen Xantia 1.6i hatchback (93K) : IG 8, 33.2.

Sharan's ideal for Tracy and the kids

Buyer four was determined on a brand new car and had the budget for one. A well-off middle-class family living in West London, they have three children at nursery or prep school and want to replace an ageing Renault Espace used by Tracy, their nanny, for the daily school run and also for family outings.

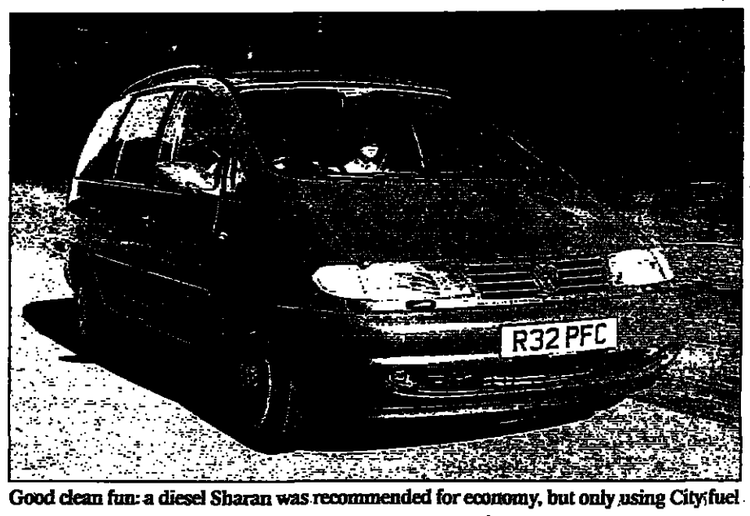
They must have a seven-seater to carry other people's kids around, too. Willing to spend up to £23,000, a £50 tax saving is insignificant, but image is important and they are very keen to appear "clean and green". So was there anything in the Budget, fuel duty apart, to influence their decision?

They drew the most surprising bit of advice from *Parker's*: to go for unfashionable diesel, so long as they run the car on the slightly more expensive low-sulphur City diesel. While normal diesel fuel went up 5.4p a litre in the Budget this clean diesel went up 1p less. Future policy may see even more punitive taxation on "dirty" diesel fuel, and this differential is likely to grow.

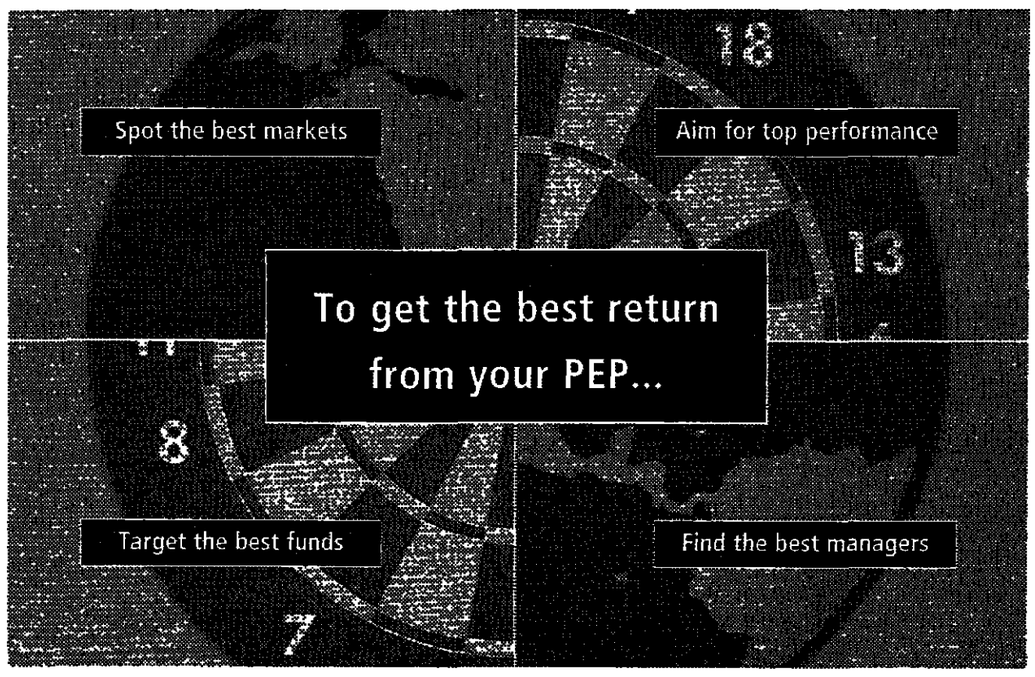
If you're looking for such a large vehicle then economical, low-emission turbo-diesel engines make most sense. *Parker's* omitted seven-seater 4x4 models from the selection because even the best (Land Rover Discovery 2.5 TDi at £22,995) can only manage about 30 mpg and so can hardly be seen as a "green" choice. But seven-seat estates, though less popular with children who love the high seating in MPVs, offer better fuel consumption because of their more aerodynamic shape and reduced weight.

Staying under 2-litre engine capacity where possible may be a good strategy for the future as differential taxation is likely to be extended. If the Government can promote a tax cut for small clean cars, it is quite capable of putting the squeeze on larger engined, thirstier vehicles.

Best choice: Volkswagen Sharan 1.9 TDi SE 110 bhp (from £21,810) : IG 11, 43.5 mpg (manual)/ 36.2 mpg (auto). Worth considering: Peugeot 806 SRDT 1.9 (£20,730) : IG 11, 34.9 mpg; Peugeot 406 1.9 LX TD Family Estate (from £16,600) : IG 12, 40.9 mpg; Renault Laguna 2.2 dT RT Family Estate (18,195) : IG 11, 38.2 mpg; Renault Espace 2.2 dT RT-X (23,145) : IG 12, 35.3 mpg.



Good clean fun: a diesel Sharan was recommended for economy, but only using City fuel



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[2]You can invest up to £6,000 in this tax year in a General PEP. The unit trust is liable to corporation tax on any income it receives. Any tax deducted from the income earned by your investment is claimed back from the Inland Revenue on your behalf and any profit you make when selling your PEP is also tax-free. The tax treatment of PEPs may be changed by future legislation. The value of any tax benefits will depend on your individual financial circumstances.

It was confirmed in the March 1998 Budget that PEPs will continue in their current format until 5th April 1999 when the Individual Savings Account will be introduced. After this date all existing PEPs can continue to be held as PEPs outside ISAs but with the same tax advantages as ISAs.

[3]Source: Investors Chronicle Magazine, 6th March 1998.

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Trust funds to offer way round new CGT rules

Gavin Lumsden looks at ways for investors to beat Budget changes

Investors are just beginning to feel the waves caused by the capital gains tax changes which Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, lobbed into their pond two weeks ago. This week it emerged that the proposals could prove a huge selling opportunity for the unit trust industry. Investors will be driven into funds, as the tax on individual shareholdings becomes more difficult to calculate.

The basic thrust of the radical reforms is to encourage people to hold on to investments for longer. In future people who sell assets and make taxable gains over their annual allowance of £6,800 will pay less CGT if they have held those assets for more than three years. After ten years the rate of CGT falls from 40 per cent to 24 per cent for higher-rate taxpayers and just 13 per cent for people on the basic rate.

However, people who hold shares directly will find the benefits of the new CGT taper hard to come by. This is because the tax clock is reset to zero every time shareholders buy more shares. Under a last-in-first-out principle the age of a pool of shares is determined by the most recent point the shares were bought. For example, if you decided to boost your windfall of Halifax shares by buying more equity in the bank every year for the next ten years you would still be liable for CGT at the full rate of 40 per cent on the whole lot. You would be judged to have held the shares for just one year because that would have been the date of your last purchase.

Financial advisers say the rule makes the argument for collective funds such as unit and investment trusts more compelling than ever. Such funds, which are effectively baskets of shares, do not have this problem. Stocks and shares bought and sold within the trusts are sheltered from CGT.

In other words, if you sell a unit trust after ten years you will benefit from the tax taper no matter how active the fund manager has been in buying and selling shares. On top of this you have the perennial advantages of collective investments: you are spreading your risk and hopefully reaping the rewards of your fund managers' stock-picking expertise. If you are sceptical about the latter you can choose one of the many index tracking funds available which eschew active stock selection in favour of buying every company in a share index, such as the FTSE 100.

Mark Dampier, of Churchill Investments, near Bristol, says the Budget changes will have reduced the elitist appeal of holding shares even for wealthy investors: "Unit trusts have always been seen as a poor man's vehicle even though it is no longer the case. It is sheer snobbery that makes people with half a bar (million) think that they have to go into shares. They feel better talking about the shares of such and such a company down at the golf club rather than the much more efficient funds they could put their money into."

However, Nat Jolowicz, of Quilter & Co, the private client fund manager, says wealthy investors should still reserve a place in their portfolio for UK shares. Although the new CGT rules are complex and require much more record-keeping, he says people should not let tax reasons influence their investment decisions. "Do you want 60 per cent of something or save 40 per cent of nothing?"

Nevertheless, investment companies have leapt at the chance to attract more funds to manage. Flemings, for instance, is offering a free share exchange into its investment trust Pep or savings scheme until the end of the month. Under the offer it is waiving its £12.50 stockbroking fee on selling shares and the 1.5 per initial fee on lump sum investments in the Fleming Pep and Share Plan.

Unit trust managers are also increasing their calls for holders of windfall shares to swap into collective funds. This is particularly true of Perpetual and Fidelity which last year offered to hold these shares for free, an opportunity which thousands of investors took.

The bad news of the Budget was the effective abolition of bed and breakfasting. By selling investments one day and buying them back the next investors had been able to avoid CGT altogether by ensuring that all their gains fell within their annual allowance. The Budget, however, imposed a 30-day time limit before investments can be repurchased, stopping the traditional end of taxyear frenzy at a stroke. Although the measure does not make B&B transactions illegal it forces investors to expose themselves to a month of stock market movements to do them properly.

Stockbrokers, who rely heavily on the business that bed and breakfasting brings, have been quick to point out loopholes. One way is to "bed and Pep". Here you can complete the overnight transaction by repurchasing the assets within a Pep. It has to be a "self-select" Pep run by a stockbroker as this is the only kind of general Pep that will allow you to hold any combination of shares and unit trusts. Naturally, the most you can bed and breakfast this way is £6,000 as this is the maximum annual allowance for general Peps. When Isas are launched next year the amount will fall to £5,000.

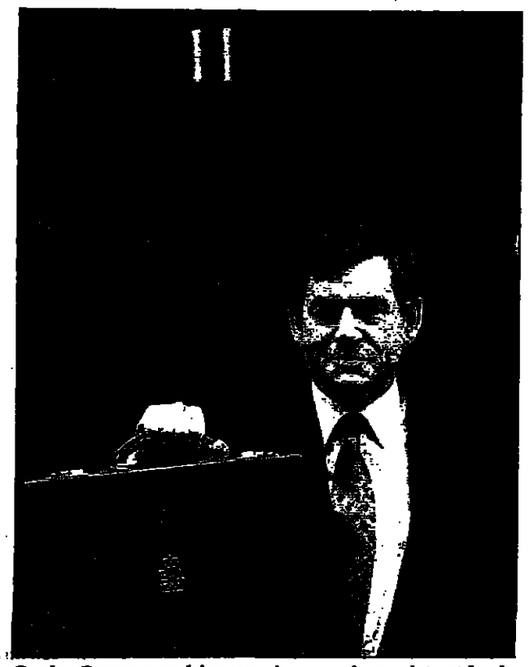
If you are married, already have a Pep and still want to do bed and breakfasting, there is another solution. Sell the shares and get your spouse to repurchase them the next day. When the 30 days have elapsed you can reverse the process: your spouse will sell the shares and you can repurchase them. However, this can quadruple the costs of a normal bed and breakfasting transaction (about £40 per £5,000). You will certainly have to pay two sets of stamp duty of 0.5 per cent.

So before you set off down this route check with your stockbroker to see if he will do a special deal. Most stockbrokers are currently reviewing their charges to cope with the expected demand.

You may be tempted to use a short cut and simply get your spouse to transfer the assets back to you after the 30 days have expired. However, be warned. This is a legal grey area and you may be challenged later by the Inland Revenue.

If you are not married, you can do the same trick with a friend. It all depends how far you trust your friends to sell the shares back to you!

As a final resort wealthy investors may be tempted to use derivatives to protect their assets during the 30-day period. Charles Schwab, the stockbroker, is considering offering a financial options service to bed and breakfasting investors who want to ensure that they can buy back their assets at the price they sold them. However, options are expensive and, in the wrong hands, inherently risky.



Gordon Brown may drive some investors into unit trust funds

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Cheltenham & Gloucester plc, Barnett Way, Gloucester GL4 3RL. With the rate quoted above the fixed rate period ends 30 June 2003. Typical example - Assumes a fixed rate of 6.99% for the full term of the mortgage as reflected in the total amount payable and APR, an interest only mortgage of £50,000 secured over 25 years and a purchase price of £70,000. 300 monthly payments of £273.77 net of tax. The net monthly payment assumes tax relief at the rate of 10% on the first £30,000 of the mortgage. The original £50,000 must be repaid at the end of the mortgage term. Total amount payable £137,883.80 including our reservation charge of £150 and closing redemption administration charge of £50. APR=7.2% (variable). The reservation charge is non-refundable and you must pay it at the time you apply for your mortgage to reserve the fixed-rate funds. Early Redemption Charge: if you repay the loan in full or in part, or ask to switch to another C&G mortgage offer within the first six years, you will have to pay an early redemption charge. The charge will be a percentage of the amount repaid as follows: Year 1=6%; Year 2=5%; Year 3=4%; Year 4=3%; Year 5=2%; Year 6=1%. This fixed-rate mortgage can be arranged on an interest only or repayment basis and requires a minimum personal deposit of 20%. For smaller deposits of between 5% and 20%, a fixed rate of 7.19% 7.5% APR is available. Minimum loan £30,000. At the end of the fixed-rate period the interest rate charged will be our standard variable mortgage rate. The equivalent monthly payment at our standard variable rate, currently 8.7%, would be £340.75. C&G will carry out, free of charge, the legal work usually required for a typical remortgage, where an existing mortgage is being replaced by one from C&G. The whole process should take no longer than eight weeks. This service does not include any Land Registration or non-standard additional costs which you will have to pay. Full details of our remortgage service are available on request. Different arrangements apply in Scotland (please ask for details). You must be at least 18 years old to apply for a loan. Please ask us if you would like a written quotation. Before agreeing a loan we will want to satisfy ourselves about the suitability of your application. This will include assessing your ability to meet the repayments and, normally, valuing the property. Any loan will require security in the form of a mortgage over the property. To help us maintain our service standards, we may record or monitor telephone calls. Cheltenham & Gloucester acts as an introducer only to the Lloyds Bank Marketing Group which is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority for life assurance, pensions and unit trust business.

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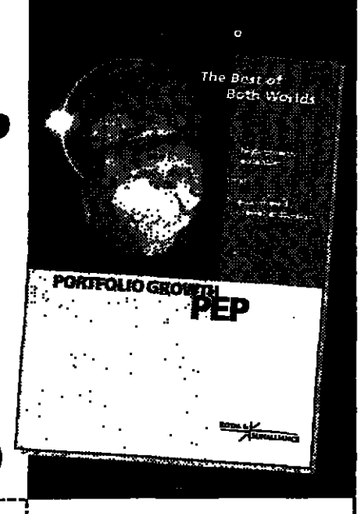


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Tokyo rides wave to nowhere

PERSONAL INVESTOR



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Things have reached a pretty pass when the chairman and chief executive of Sony declares: "The Japanese economy is on the verge of collapsing." Norio Ohga even compared Japan's Prime Minister to Herbert Hoover, the American President whose name has, a trifle unfairly, become a byword for doing too little too late to counter a slump. This was meant to insult the country's less-than-inspiring leader.

Sony Corporation is, after all, one of the world-class Japanese companies whose shares have survived the average fall of two thirds on the Tokyo market. Sony shares are compared as much to Coca-Cola as to local banks, retailers or widget-makers. And few of Sony's domestic peers would focus corporate power in an Anglo-Saxon-style boss.

That is why others dare not breathe such a bleak and brusque message. Otherwise, they clearly would. The latest measure of business confidence shows the worst state of despair for almost four years. It shows that the nascent recovery, knocked on the head by a premature attempt to follow international advice and get the budget back into shape, is dead.

Traditionally, this should be the moment when brave investors buy. When everyone else is gloomy, and especially when others are forced to sell because of collapsing asset prices, shares must be oversold.

In Korea, this certainly proved correct, at least in the short run. On average shares lost more than half their market value in Seoul between August and the beginning of December. Anyone who bought then, as PDFM and one or two other bargain-hunting fund managers did, should have made about 60 per cent on their money within three months. But the bounces in Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur were less dramatic and, even in Korea, shares have sagged of late.

One cause of reassessment is the lack of life in Japan's economy. Although America and Europe might still be the best markets for key exports, Japan has been vital as a provider of capital, of loans for over-expanding banking systems and of inward investment as well as a big market for all manner of goods.

On normal tests, there should be stronger reasons for buying Japan. Eight years after rising interest rates burst the 1980s financial bubble, maximum gloom coincides with seemingly much grander measures to reflate the economy. The latest package is claimed to be worth more than £70 billion, over 3 per cent of national income. These are the biggest numbers so far, but the package still seems to rely on public works rather than putting money directly into people's pockets. In advance of the detailed announcement of measures (assuming they have yet been decided), they lack credibility among those whose confidence desperately needs to be revived.

The state of Tokyo markets also lacks some credibility. The Nikkei 225 index duly fell more than 700 points, about 4.5 per cent, in the two days after Mr Ohga threw hispebble into the pond. But that left the Nikkei at 15,518 by week's end, the sort of level it has hit many times as it has yo-yoed roughly between 15,000 and 21,000 over the past six years.

Such is the degree of distrust locally, however, that investors are not sure that 14,500-15,000 is a true floor or whether the authorities, top houses and institutional investors have somehow fiddled the market to stop it falling ever further at some point or other. Still less clear is whether the powers-that-be could manage it again, while they are caught up in the witchhunt that is now paralysing the old system.

For overseas investors, the yen's renewed weakness adds to the risk of surfing the Nikkei back up. There should still be profits to make. In Japan as in the other stricken Asian markets, the better course is surely to stock up at modest discounts on the relatively few quality international stocks that can sail through domestic slump than to try to make a market killing in the bargain basement.

Halifax puts up yearly fixed rates

Halifax, the largest provider of personal savings in the UK with more than 15 million savings accounts, increased some of the rates on its Guaranteed Reserve account by up to 0.4 per cent this week.

The move means balances above £10,000 invested for a year now earn 7.5 per cent compared with 7.1 per cent.

However, although the increase places the Halifax account among some of the most competitive fixed rates, the fixed rates pale when compared with the returns offered by many notice accounts.

The increase in rates applies to both the £2,000 plus and £10,000 plus tiers for the six months and one-year guaranteed periods. But the rates on the two and three-year fixes remain unchanged. Halifax said the rates for longer fixes have not increased because of unfavourable rates in the medium-term money markets prompted by uncertainty over monetary union.

Similarly, last week National Savings lowered its rates on new sales of six of its fixed-rate bonds, most of which are fixed for five years.

While short-term rates rose last year, medium-term rates fell and have continued to fall this year. Short-term rates are now much higher than medium-term rates throughout the industry. And notice accounts are offering some of the best rates at the moment.

For sums of £10,000 or over Birmingham Midshires Building Society is near the top paying 7.95 per cent for its 120-day notice account, according to *Moneyfacts*. Northern Rock offers 7.9 per cent on its 90-day account and Bristol & West 7.8 per cent while Investec Bank and Legal & General Bank pay 8 per cent on their one-year and 60-day accounts respectively.

Instant-access accounts also offer good value. Northern Rock pays 7.85 per cent for deposits of £10,000 and Alliance & Leicester 7.5 per cent on the same amount.

However, the Halifax said savers are still interested in the security offered by fixed rate accounts. Mike Ellis, banking and savings director at Halifax said: "Our Guaranteed Reserve account is particularly attractive to those who want a fixed return on their money over a specific period and we are now able to offer some of the best rate around for terms of six months and a year."



Getting a good fix is now rather a short-term measure

The Halifax now pays interest of 7 per cent on deposits of £2,000 or over for six months and 7.25 per cent for a one-year fix on the same amount. Deposits of £10,000 earn 7.3 per cent for six months and 7.5 per cent for a year. The rates on the two and three years remain unchanged at 6.75 per cent for a two-year fixon sums of £2,000 and over and 6.55 per cent for the same amount over three years.

Norwich & Peteborough offers 7.55 per cent on a minimum deposit of £5,000 fixed for six months. Bristol & West pays 7.45 per cent on the same basis but the best value comes from the Julian Hodge Bank, which pays 7.62 per cent on a six-month fix on sums as low as £2,00.

The Halifax rate ises come a week before the Monetary Policy Committee meets to discuss base rates. Vicki Burn, of *Moneyfacts*, said: "It's an interesting one to watch as it is often seen to move prior to a change in base rates. It's usually a good gide as to where rates are heding."

Children saving with the Coventry BuildingSociety are also benefiting from a rate rise. Interest rateson the inst-ant-access savingsaccount for under-18-year-olds living in the society's area of operation went up from 7.25per cent to 7.75 per cent thisweek. The minimum investment is £1 and the limit is £5000.

SUSAN IMMETT

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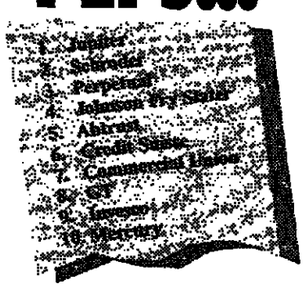
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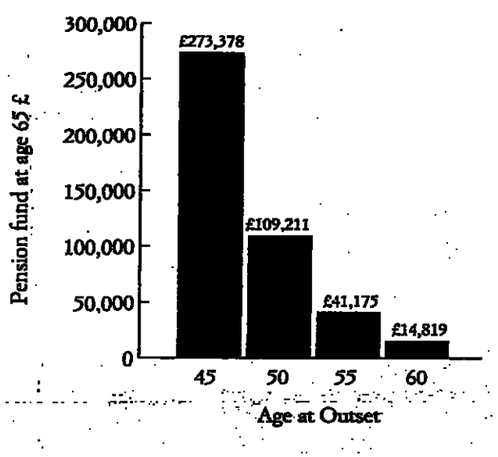
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TAKE FIVE MINUTES AND YOU COULD DOUBLE YOUR PENSION

A typical Equitable regular contribution with-profits pension fund has approximately doubled in value every five years, so the sooner you start saving the better off you will be when you retire. Put it another way. If you delay for five years, your retirement income could be halved. So five minutes spent reading on could well be worth your while.

In the chart below, we show the huge difference in the value of a £200 per month personal pension plan on your 65th birthday, depending on the age at which you start contributing.



This shows the actual open market option funds for a £200 per month Equitable Life with-profits personal pension plan as at 1 July 1997, pension benefits taken at exact age 65. Source: Money Management, October 1997.

Of course, the final value of the investment is not guaranteed.

Time, however, is not the only factor which determines how much you receive. The choice of pension company also makes a big difference in two important respects:
First, how much of your money disappears in charges before it can be invested.
Second, how well the balance is invested.

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Three good reasons why we are renowned for our low costs.

It's also why an annual Planned Savings' survey in October 1997 once again shows The Equitable Life as having the lowest ratio of expenses to premium income of all companies surveyed across the UK.

What is important is that we pass these savings on to our clients in the form of unusually low charges, so more of your money can be invested for the future.

IN A CLASS OF OUR OWN

WITH-PROFITS PLANS COMPARED

A simple rating system, suggested in an Office of Fair Trading discussion document, allows people to make a straight comparison between pension products by giving each one a series of ratings, on a scale of A+ to C-, both for past performance and charges. A recent survey using this rating method showed The Equitable to be well ahead of the field.

PERSONAL PENSIONS RATINGS

Company	Past Performance Age next birthday - 50	Own-charge projections Age next birthday - 50
The Equitable Life	**A+AB**	**A+A+A+**
AXA Equity & Law	CCA	BBC
Britannia Life	***	CBB
CIS	BA*	CBA+
Clerical Medical	BAB	BAA
Commercial Union	*CC	ABA
Eagle Star	BAA	CBA
Ecclesiastical	***	***
Friends Provident	BBB	BC-A
General Accident	A*A	BAB
Legal & General	CBB	AAB
London Life	**C-	***
MGM Assurance	A+A+C	BBC-
National Mutual	BBB	BBB
Norwich Union	BBA	BAA
NPI	BBC-	BAB
Prudential	***	A+AC
RNPFN	ABA+	CC-A+
Royal London	BAA	BBC
Royal Sun Alliance	CC-C-	ABC
Scottish Amicable	BCB	BBC
Scottish Equitable	BCB	CBA
Scottish Friendly	BBB	C-CC-
Scottish Life	BBB	CBB
Scottish Mutual	BBA	ABC
Scottish Provident	*AC	***
Scottish Widows	BCB	ABB
Standard Life	BBC	ABC
Sun Life	CBB	BBB
Swiss Life	CC*	***
Wesleyan Assurance	*AA	BBC

* Denotes where no rating has been given due to company not having provided a figure.

Past performance – the three ratings refer to transfer value after 5 years, transfer value after 10 years and retirement fund (incl terminal bonus) respectively. All figures are calculated as at 1.4.97, assuming policies taken out six months before next birthday. Monthly premium £30. Retirement age 65.

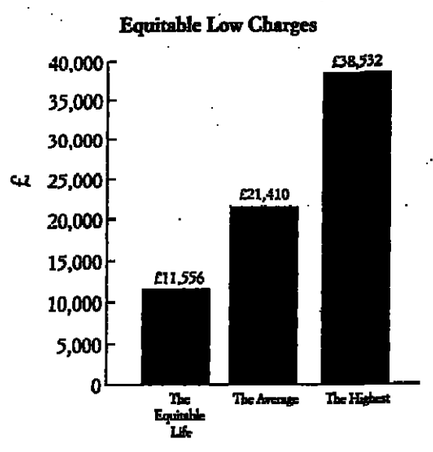
Own charge projections – the three ratings refer to transfer value at end of year 5, transfer value at end of year 20 and retirement fund respectively. Projections are based on plans commencing 1.4.97 and are in accordance with the PIA's projection rules, using the mid-point assumptions. Investment growth rate before charges 9% pa. RPI and AEI inflation rates are 4.5 and 6% pa respectively. Retirement age 65. Monthly premium £100.

Source: Money Marketing FPR With-Profits Survey, May 1997.

OUR LOW CHARGES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The chart below shows the effect that different companies' charges will have on a £200 a month with-profits pension plan over 20 years.

HOW MUCH A PENSION IS REDUCED BY CHARGES OVER 20 YEARS



These figures relate to projected open market option funds as at 1 July 1997 for new style with-profits personal pension plans for a man aged 45 due to retire at age 65. Monthly contributions £200. Assumed annual growth rate 9%. Source: Money Management, October 1997.

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Annual surveys by Planned Savings magazine put the whole subject of long-term investment into perspective. Since the first survey in 1974, The Equitable Life's regular contribution with-profits pensions have had 45 top ten placings out of a possible 56. Our nearest challenger has managed just 31.

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Caroline Merrell reports on the latest moves at Nationwide Building Society

Hardern and company go back on the hustings

Michael Hardern, the eccentric former royal butler who last year failed to get on to the Nationwide board to force it to convert, is making a second attempt for election.

Mr Hardern is to stand for one of three board positions to be voted on this year. Last year Mr Hardern and four other pro-conversion candidates stood for election in an attempt to turn the Nationwide into a bank. Conversion could have paid windfalls worth around £2,000 to each of Nationwide's 3.5 million members.

Mr Hardern's election campaign was marred by a series of strange events, including a last-minute switch in favour of keeping the society mutual. The loss of the vote was blamed on his bizarre behaviour, which included wearing a dress. Members ended up voting three to one against Mr Hardern and his companions.

Also standing for election is Andrew Muir, the 32-year-old managing director of a financial recruitment consultancy from Slough. Mr Muir is not in favour of a straight conversion of the building society. Instead, he wants it to pay out cash from reserves to members.

Although Mr Muir's application to stand has been accepted by the Nationwide — 50 signatures from members of two years' standing are required — a special resolution on distributing the cash has not yet been accepted by the society. The Nationwide's legal opinion says that it would not be possible to distribute cash in the way that Mr Muir proposes.

Mr Muir said: "I am hoping to have the proposals redrafted before the deadline." Even if he does not succeed in having the proposal redrafted in time, he will still stand for election. "If I get elected, then I will try to call an EGM to look at the revised resolution."





Michael Hardern, left, is making a second attempt to join the Nationwide board, and Andrew Muir, who is also standing

Mr Muir is confident that the result of the vote will be very different this time around. He said: "I have had around 1,000 letters — 700 claim that they were coerced by branch staff in to voting in favour of the board. They say they would vote differently this time." The Nationwide denies this, pointing out that the pattern of the voting through branches was similar to the pattern of postal voting. The vote was cleared by the Electoral Reform Society.

Mr Hardern said: "Frankly, I do not think I stand a chance against this organisation, but members should have another opportunity to vote for conversion." Mr Hardern pointed out that Nationwide now has many more members — 4.5 million. Many of these will be "carpetbaggers", having opened accounts with the aim of getting a windfall in the event of the society converting.

Nationwide has 13 board members. Those standing for re-election are Charles Nunneley, the chairman; Bernard Simpson, executive director; and Paul Twyman, another non-executive director. The voting will take place in June, with the annual meeting on July 23.

It is now too late for anyone to attempt to be a carpetbagger with the Nationwide. At the end of last year, the Nationwide introduced a rule under which new members had to pledge any windfall they might receive to a charity.

Nationwide said that it was confident that it could defeat this new attack on its board. It said it was still committed to returning benefits to members in the form of higher savings rates and lower mortgage rates.

A recent report from *Which?*, the magazine for the Consumers' Association, found that smaller societies offered better rates than some of the high street names.

According to the report, the savings market appears to be dominated by a few of the big household names such as the Halifax and Abbey National. The new entrants in to the market, such as Direct Line, have already made a splash with headline-grabbing deposit rates that are above those that are offered by the high street names.

With the new entrants jostling with the big names, it is easy to overlook the fact there are more than 70 mutual societies in the sector. Many are regionally based with small branch networks. Research from *Which?* found that many of these societies offer higher rates than their bigger counterparts.

The magazine looked at the rates paid on sums of between £500 and £2,500 at 50 regional building societies. The rates were analysed over a period of two years and compared with the ten largest institutions, including the Alliance & Leicester, Abbey National and Halifax.

The average rate offered by the regional societies has been around 0.3 per cent higher than their bigger rivals. Savings of £2,500 in a local building society will attract rates that are on average 0.5 per cent higher than the rates offered by the biggest savings institutions.

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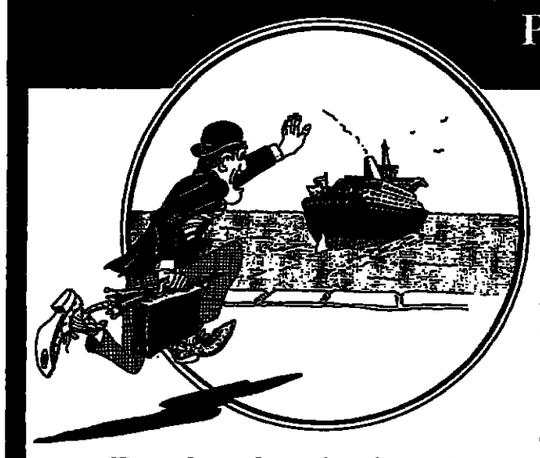
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هكذا من الأصل

The Pru and M&S fight for your interest

HIT OR MISS

Personal loans have traditionally been dangerous territory. From Shylock to high street banks, there has always been someone somewhere waiting to throw money at you — and take their pound of flesh.

But increasing competition means that personal loans are no longer the beasts they used to be.

This week Marks & Spencer financial services, which has 8 per cent of the direct loans market, cut the cost of its personal loans rate by 2 per cent. You do not have to be an account cardholder to apply, but it helps, because rates for cardholders have been cut by up to 3 per cent.

There are currently 185,000 accounts open and more than £2.2 billion has been borrowed since 1988.

The new rates start at just 11.9 per cent APR for account cardholders with personal-loan protection. Loans with insurance for non-account holders start at 12.9 per cent APR. Loans are available from £500 up to £10,000 or £15,000 for cardholders and existing loan customers, with monthly repayments between 12 months and seven years. Smaller loans are more expensive: 15.9 per cent APR for cardholders and 17.9 per cent APR for others on sums between £500 and £999.

Prudential has also been swift to market its Express Loan, offering a rate of 11.7 per cent APR on loans of £9,000 to £12,000. But the cost goes up for smaller sums. Loans between £6,000 and £8,999 are payable at 13.3 per cent APR and sums between £2,000 to £5,999 attract a rate of 13.9 per cent APR. Those borrowing between £1,000 and £1,999 pay 17.9 per cent APR.

However, unlike Marks & Spencer, which charges two months' interest for redemption, there is no redemption penalty with the Pru, giving it a slight edge. The life assurance company also says loans can get approved in just ten minutes with the money available three days later.

However, M&S says it will waive the redemption penalty if the loan is settled early, provided you take out another loan. Rates are for the duration with both companies.

Mark Bolland, of Chamberlain de Broe, said: "On the face of it the M&S loan is offering pretty competitive rates and appears to be competing with the Prudential. But with no redemption penalty, the Prudential loan is more attractive for larger loans. It is also marginally cheaper."

Both loans are among the most competitive on the market. Northern Rock tops the charts with 9.9 per cent APR for sums of £5,000, if you take out insurance. Without loan protection the rate goes up to 12.7 per cent APR. The Yorkshire bank charges 12.5 per cent APR and Direct Line 12.8 per cent if you are over 22 years-old.

Account cardholders with M&S borrowing £10,000 pay £232.47 a month over 72 months, including personal loan protection. People without a store card pay £239.13. Monthly payment excluding protection is £201.18. M&S says that 40 per cent of personal loans are taken out with insurance, 10 per cent more than two years ago.

The same loan with the Pru over 60 months — there is a five-year limit — costs £262.09 a month without insurance.

For loans of £5,000 and £2,500, the two companies are at loggerheads, offering very similar rates. Borrowing £5,000 from the Pru over 48 months costs £156.08 a month while M&S charges cardholders £152.02, including insurance.

Doug Conquer, at Clark Conway, the independent financial providers in Wimbledon, said: "For years unsecured loans have been a rip-off charging between 19 and 25 per cent APR and with quite high penalties if you pay them off early.

"But I think these rates are a better deal. Obviously M&S wants the small as well as the £10,000 market. But the Pru wants the £9,000-plus bracket. Their rates between £1,000 and £2,000 are not very good. Clearly they don't want that sort of business. But it's a very good rate for the £10,000-plus."

Score:
Prudential ★★★★
M&S ★★★
Products graded from ★ (poor), to ★★★★★ (outstanding).

SUSAN EMMETT



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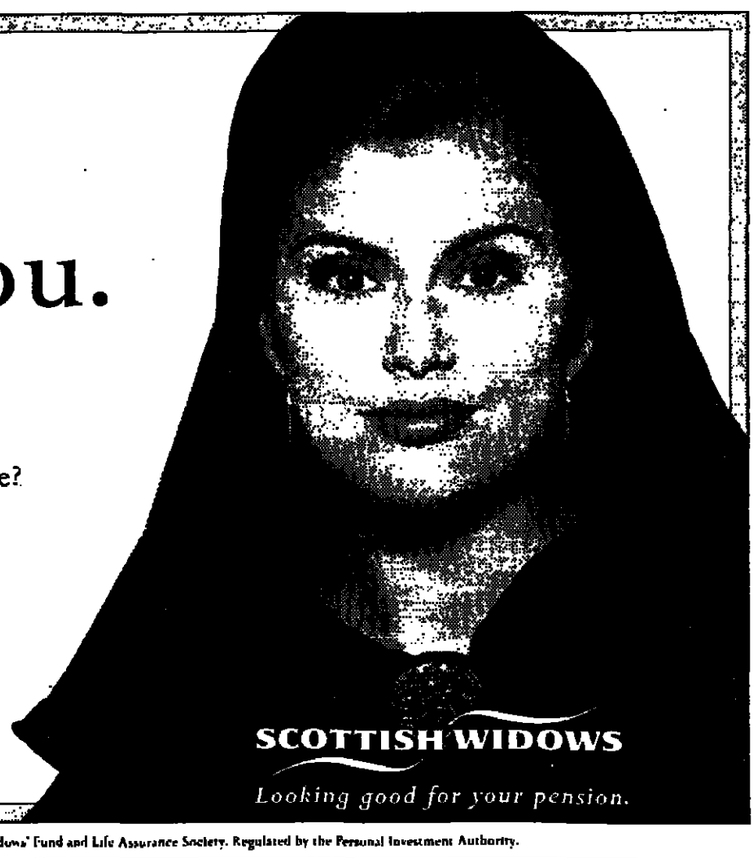
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SEC

Helen Pridham explains the benefits of belonging to an employer's pension scheme

Moving in the right company

YOU AND YOUR PENSION



No matter which company you work for, an employer's scheme is usually the best you can get

Membership of an employer's pension scheme is about as good as it gets in pension terms. Yet, until a few years ago, few employees appreciated the value of belonging to one. This was why it was so easy for unscrupulous salesmen to mis-sell personal pensions to employees who would have been better off in their occupational scheme.

Awareness of pensions has grown significantly, but there are still many employees who do not understand what their company provides. Since 1988, when companies lost their power to make pension scheme membership compulsory, around 20 per cent of new employees have chosen not to join.

As a result, they have lost the contribution their employer would have made, effectively opting for a pay cut.

Another indicator of the lack of understanding is the low take-up of additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) which enable employees to top up their company pension. The latest annual survey by the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) shows that on average only 15 per cent of members make AVCs. The others may feel they are being well provided for, but only around 8 per cent of men and 4 per cent of women will achieve a maximum pension.

Membership of a company pension scheme undoubtedly offers the best chance most people have of achieving an adequate retirement income. It can provide a pension of up to two thirds of earnings at retirement.

But there are various reasons why a pension may fall short of expectations. Frequent job changes are a major cause, but it may also be due to the scope of the scheme. That is why it is important to find out what type of scheme you belong to, and how it works.

There are two main types:

■ **Final salary schemes**: these are also known as defined benefit schemes because they provide a pension which is a predetermined percentage of final pay for each year you belonged to the scheme. The build-up is typically one-sixtieth of final salary per year of service, but some schemes only accumulate at one-eightieth per year or less.

Also, your pension may not be related to your whole salary. Around 45 per cent of company schemes make an allowance for the basic state pension in their calculations. These are known as integrated schemes. The first part of your earnings, equivalent to the basic state pension, is disregarded when calculating your contributions and your pension is based on the remaining salary.

So your company pension will be a lower proportion of your total salary. Other variable earnings such as bonuses and overtime may not be included in the calculations either. In these situations, topping up with AVCs may be particularly advisable.

The amount employees contribute varies. Some employers pay the whole cost. For other schemes, the average employee contribution is around 5 per cent and the employer pays the rest. The long-term rate which employers pay to final salary schemes is more than 12 per cent.

The advantage of this type of scheme is that the value of your pension is linked to your salary at or near retirement, and you don't have to worry about the state of the stock market when you retire or the level of annuity rates. Your employer bears the risk that investment conditions may be unfavourable or that the Government changes the tax rules (as it did in last year's Budget).

However, when investment returns are good the company may be able to take a "contribution holiday". The other advantage of this type of scheme is that your pension will increase year by year.

Public sector employees have long enjoyed inflation-linked pensions. Other employers have made discretionary increases, but in future any benefits arising from service after tomorrow, the new tax year, must be increased in line with the Retail Price Index, up to a maximum of 5 per cent a year.

The amount of your pension will depend on how long you have worked for your employer. Few people stay with one company long enough to accumulate the maximum two-thirds pension. In a one-sixtieth scheme, you would have to work for the same employer for 40 years.

Research has shown that 22 years is a man's average number of years for which contributions to a company scheme are made. It is 16 for women. This is why topping up with AVCs is advisable.

■ **Money purchase schemes**: these build up a pot of money so that at retirement an annuity can be purchased to pay your pension.

They are also called defined contribution schemes because the contributions are the only predetermined factor. The final size of your pension will depend on several unknowns.

The amount in your pension pot will be determined largely by the investment performance of the pension company and investment conditions at the time you retire. The amount of the pension which can be purchased will depend on the level of annuity rates (ie, long-term interest rates) at the time of your retirement.

The employer does not have to bear any risk with this type of scheme and it has become the favoured choice for many newly established company pension schemes.

Nevertheless, the employee does still gain a considerable benefit from the employers' contributions. About a quarter of money purchase schemes are non-contributory and the remainder are split roughly evenly between those requiring fixed employee contributions and those where employee contributions vary (often according to the employee's choice).

Overall, the average employee contribution is 4 per cent. Employer contributions may also vary, depending on factors such as age, length of service or the contribution level chosen by the member. However, the average combined employee-employer contribution of 9.3 per cent is considerably lower than in a final salary scheme.

In theory, this level of contribution maintained throughout your working life will produce a pension of just under half your salary at retirement. Again, AVCs should be considered to improve your prospects or make up for gaps in your contribution record.

The type of annuity purchased may depend on the rules of the scheme you belong to. However, any pension purchased with contributions paid after tomorrow, the start of the new tax year, must increase with inflation, subject to a maximum of 5 per cent a year.

Next week: Topping up your employer's pension, AVCs versus FSAVCs and other forms of saving

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"We believe strongly in active fund management – and have built a talented team with a shared vision and a clear understanding of our clients' expectations."



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Nice decor, shame about the loan



COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH

Personal Finance Editor

The business of buying houses has its many irritations. But the insights it affords into the domestic lives of others and their interior decorating styles provides some solace for conveyancing delays. The experience of viewing ten flats where every adult slept with a menagerie of soft toys is an abiding memory.

Choosing a mortgage has no such compensations. You must make your selection from a bewildering array of loans, gambling on the future direction of interest rates and your own earnings.

Sniggering at the colour scheme in the branch provides little light relief from pondering the implications of redemption penalties. A careful surveyor should expose most of the defects of a property. But a mortgage only proves to be a costly mistake when it is too late to withdraw.

The mortgage industry is very proud of its code of selling practice under which lenders can now offer an advice service with a written loan recommendation. For the present, most of the top names will be providing advice. But, at Lloyds TSB, most prospective borrowers will receive information only on the bank's mortgage range, advice being given at just a dozen of its Cheltenham & Gloucester outlets.

Lloyds TSB's decision not to make advice available suggests a reluctance to deal with dissatisfied customers. The willingness of the rest to provide this service indicates that they do not fear the code's puny penalties. Lenders also know that the provision of advice can be neatly turned into yet another marketing ploy.

It is strange that the Government seems happy that lenders can choose whether they dispense advice to customers on the largest financial commitment most people ever undertake. Sales of other financial schemes are tightly controlled, even for modest amounts.

Before the election, Labour was determined to bring mortgages, which are currently unregulated, within the Financial Services Act. Now ministers seem to be content with the arrangements.

They should reconsider this stance. Some borrowers know exactly which loan they want. But the baffled remainder need access to guidance.

About half of borrowers now organise their loans through intermediaries. What guarantees the quality of the advice given in these encounters, where the middleman is anxious for his commission from the lender and eager to sell an insurance policy or two?

Another area of concern is the growing "sub-prime" market, the last resort for many self-employed and those with bad credit records. Fortunes are being be made in this sector from borrowers so grateful for loans that they will pay well above average rates.

If ministers believe that all is well in the mortgage market, then we hope that they are ready to deal with the consequences of their complacency.

Just hang on

These are lean times for carpetbaggers. The demutualisation of the RAC looks as if it will benefit only members of the club, not the humble motorist.

Although another dissident is seeking a seat on the Nationwide board, his plan for redistributing the society's wealth appears unworkable. However, rumours about the intentions of other supposedly committed mutuals means that this is not the time to close those speculative accounts.

Turbulence in trust land

There is a natural tendency to describe every significant event in the lethargic £62 billion investment trust sector as a "watershed". Recently, however, this has led to a gross overuse of the word as nearly every trust annual meeting has become an arena for an angry standoff between shareholders and their boards.

The result has been a rash of resolutions to reduce discounts on shares, change investment style and to improve corporate governance.

By any standards, however, this has been an extraordinary week where the overworked epithet for once is justified. Shake-ups, revolts, victories and surprise bids — we have had them all.

Fleming Investment Trust Management (FITM), a £5 billion industry giant, kicked off the busy week with the announcement of a radical change in policy. Casting off its traditionalist image, the fund manager said it wanted to reduce the discounts on its entire stable of investment trusts by altering the supply and demand on its shares. In a two-part proposal it recommended that the boards of the 19 Fleming trusts consider buying back shares which institutional investors do not want.

Although it is unlikely many shares will be bought back before next April — when tax changes will make the task easier — FITM's move is a welcome statement of intent for any dissatisfied shareholders.

FITM also asked the boards to contribute to an increase in marketing to independent financial advisers in order to raise up to £2 billion from private investors over the next five years.

This is a radical step in a cost-conscious industry where marketing costs are paltry compared with unit trusts.

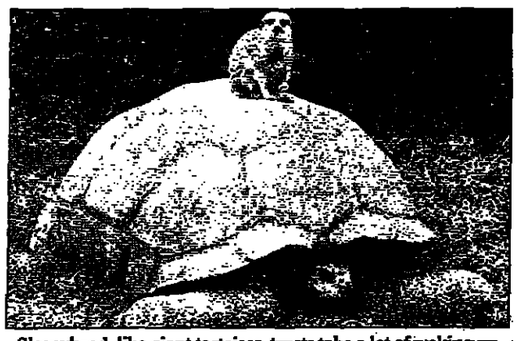
In tandem with its vision of a leaner, more Sid-friendly stable of investment trusts FITM is taking drastic action also to ensure that the boards are independent from their manager. In a dramatic cull of its own placemen, FITM said six chairman and eight directors who either work or have worked for the company will stand down from Fleming trust boards during the next year.

Mark Fitzalan Howard, one of the chairmen who is destined to go, launched the second surprise of the week, by leading a sudden attack by Fleming Claverhouse, a strong UK investment trust, on Baring Tribune, a relatively poor international trust, only 15 minutes before Baring faced an annual meeting vote on its future.

Like a tortoise, Baring Tribune proved itself resilient enough to repel a small group of restless shareholders, but it may yet be flipped over by an attack from a larger predator such as Claverhouse or Legal & General, which wants to buck up its performance by turning it into an all-share tracker.

More bids are yet to come, so watch this space.

GAVIN LUMSDEN

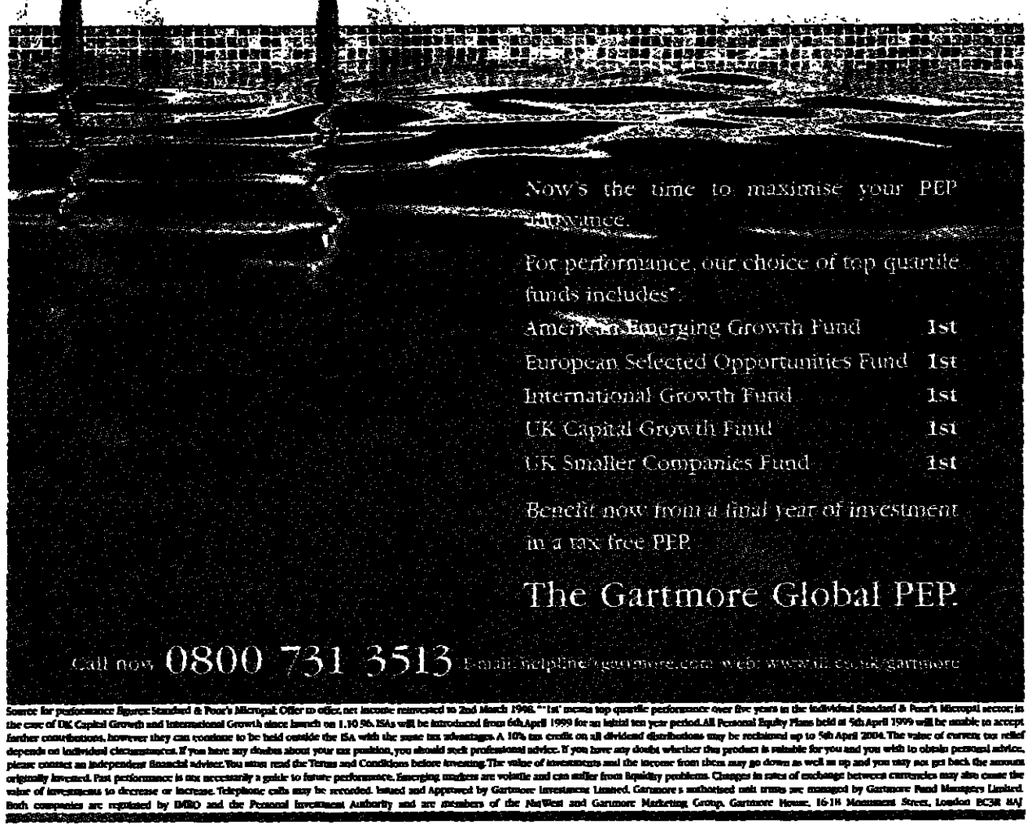


Sleepyhead: like giant tortoises, trusts take a lot of waking up

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Source for performance figures: Standard & Poor's Micropal. Offer to offer, net income reinvested to 2nd March 1998. *1st means top quartile performance over five years in the Individual Standard & Poor's Micropal sector; in the case of UK Capital Growth and International Growth since launch on 1.10.96. ISAs will be introduced from 6th April 1999 for an initial ten year period. All Personal Equity Plans held at 5th April 1999 will be unable to accept further contributions, however they can continue to be held outside the ISA with the same tax advantages. A 10% tax credit on all dividend distributions may be reclaimed up to 5th April 2004. The value of current tax relief depends on individual circumstances. If you have any doubts about your tax position, you should seek professional advice. If you have any doubts whether this product is suitable for you and you wish to obtain personal advice, please contact an independent financial adviser. You must read the Terms and Conditions before investing. The value of investments and the income from them may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amounts originally invested. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Emerging markets are volatile and can suffer from liquidity problems. Changes in rates of exchange between currencies may also cause the value of investments to decrease or increase. Telephone calls may be recorded, issued and Approved by Gartmore Investment Limited. Gartmore's authorised unit trusts are managed by Gartmore Fund Managers Limited. Both companies are regulated by IMRO and the Personal Investment Authority and are members of the NatWest and Gartmore Marketing Group, Gartmore House, 16-18 Monument Street, London EC3R 8AJ.

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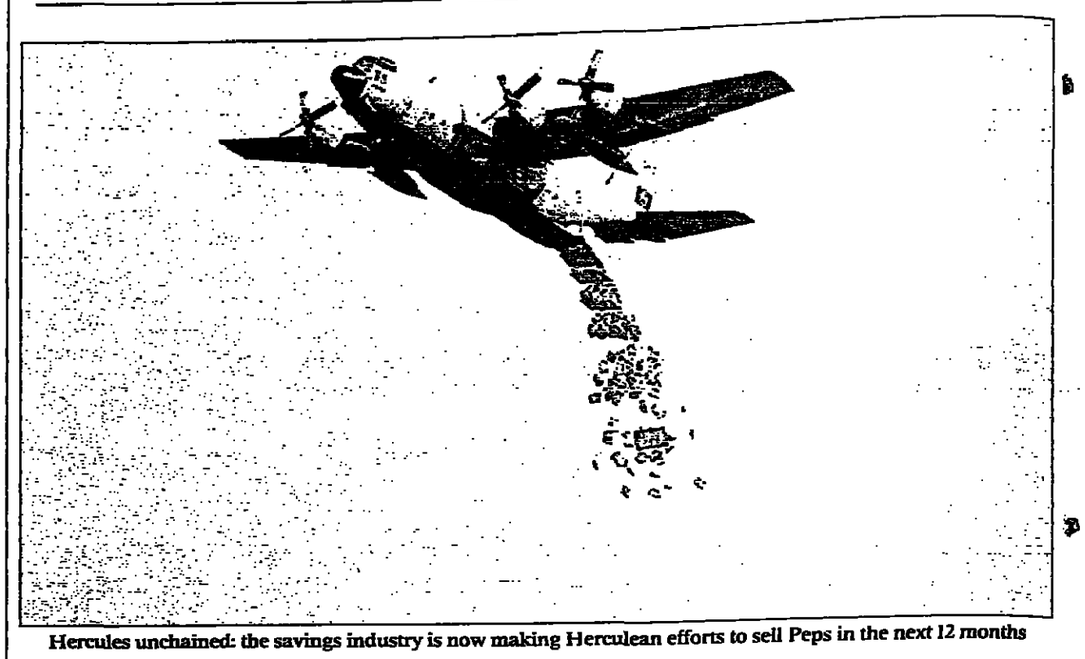
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Magnus Grimond tries to find the strongest vehicle for your savings



Hercules unchained: the savings industry is now making Herculean efforts to sell Peps in the next 12 months

Hurry, only 365 days to buy that Pep

Gordon Brown's partial reprieve of the personal equity plan in last month's Budget has unleashed a huge marketing blitz by the savings industry. The Chancellor's change of heart means that from Monday every adult has the chance to tuck away up to £9,000 in Peps before their replacement, the individual savings account (Isas), comes in next year.

Mr Brown has said existing plans can continue rolling up tax-free indefinitely, so not surprisingly, the savings industry is making Herculean efforts to persuade everyone to scrape together their last groat to pile it into a Pep.

But, there are well over 1,000 Peps on the market, so choosing the right one for your needs presents a bewildering prospect, and we have asked the experts for help.

■ Safety first, says Ian Millward, of Chase de Vere

A useful starting point for anyone selecting a Pep is to study the *Pep Guide*, published by Chase de Vere, the financial adviser. It provides a comprehensive list of nearly all the Peps on general offer to the public, with performance figures.

These show that the average Pep delivered 15.6 per cent compound annual growth over the past five years to last December. Even with the tax breaks, that was a disappointing 1.8 percentage points behind the average 17.4 per cent growth in the FT all-share index. But there were wide variations. Had you been in Clerical Medical's Evergreen ethical fund, the return would have been a meagre 6.4 per cent, whereas top performer Old Mutual European turned in more than four times as much at 28.6 per cent.

Despite the differences, Chase marketing manager Ian Millward has no hesitation in his advice to potential savers. "Definitely they should be using their Pep allowance and probably as early in the new tax year as they can. It is set to be a bumper year for Peps."

Not only will the benefits last longer, but people make better decisions at the start of the year when they are less rushed, he says.

But he gave warning that indiscriminate use of performance tables, even in the *Pep Guide*, can be dangerous. Very often narrowly focused funds will appear at the top or the bottom of the tables, because they are both risky and volatile. Before choosing a Pep, Mr Millward says, investors must decide what is their attitude to risk and their financial requirements. For the cautious, he chooses Save & Prosper's extra income fund, half invested in gilts and corporate bonds. More adventurous types could take a chance on the abilities of Jim Cox, mananger of Schroder's UK Enterprise, who is "not afraid to back his own judgment" by focusing narrowly on about 30 stocks that he really likes.

To get some overseas spread, Mr Millward picks Invesco European growth, Jupiter European or Fidelity's triple performance Pep, which allocates your investment between three underlying funds in the UK, Europe, South-East Asia or the US. Not for the faint-hearted.

■ Ignore fees at your own peril, advises Vanessa James, of Legal & General

If you are a first-time investor in a Pep, Mr Millward would agree with Vanessa James, the head of UK equities at Legal & General, who says that tracker funds which mirror the main market indices are ideal. Their fee structrure is attractive, says Ms James. "Even though we have consistently outperformed the all-share index with our active funds, the difference in fees, which is 1.5 per cent on active funds against 0.5 per cent for a tracker, means there is little difference in the performance.

"An actively managed fund needs to outperform a tracker by 1 per cent just to make up for the difference in annual charges. In fact, as the *Pep Guide* figures show, most have come nowhere near that. And while Legal & General is unusual in having abolished its initial charges, you may also find yourself swimming against a 3 per cent or 4 per cent bid-offer spread when investing in a conventional unit trust within a Pep. In contrast, most trackers have low or no initial charges.

"Active fund managers have really got to run to stand still against these trackers with their much lower fees. We have just about been doing that, but you have to be very careful which active fund manager you get involved with. Most of the big ones have dropped an absolute clanger," says Ms James. In fact, the figures show around 70 per cent of funds have failed to beat the index.

■ Small companies could clean up, forecasts Jim Slater

However, Jim Slater, the former entrepreneur turned share tipster, now believes that the "top down" success of tracker funds may be coming to an end. He said: "There is

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while **Karen Woolfson** gives a warning about buying a single-company Pep

Before taking the plunge . . .



MARK BOURDILLON

Prepare to wave goodbye to your single-company Pep allowance. When the individual savings accounts (Isas) make their debut next April, Peps will cease to be offered. Investors will not be allowed to put additional money into their plans but will be able to retain the holdings — and the tax advantages.

Before taking the plunge, remember that single-company Peps are not for novice investors. They were originally designed for employees in profit-sharing schemes who wanted to shelter their company shares in a tax-free environment, but they are now most suitable for the sophisticated investor who wants to maximise tax-free returns. However, single-company Peps have proved very useful to beneficiaries of last year's building society share bonanzas.

Single-company Peps are best suited to higher-rate taxpayers who have a portfolio of shares worth at least £30,000. So an investment of £3,000 in this tax shelter represents a minimum of 10 per cent of their holdings ensuring a spread of risk.

Basic-rate taxpayers should check whether the charges deducted are greater than the projected tax savings.

Richard Wastcoat, the executive director of retail marketing at Fidelity Investments, says: "Before investors take out a single-company Pep they should use up their full general Pep allowance of £6,000, which is less risky."

There are various forms of single-company Peps. Previously, investment and unit trusts and bonds were generally excluded, but they are now used in some new-style plans (see below).

You can choose between self-select Peps where you choose the stock and managed off-the-shelf plans, allowing a professional manager to make stock recommendations. Some managers also use the single-company rules to offer special hybrid Pep schemes. One example is the HSBC capital-protected Pep which exploits a loophole in the rules.

MANAGED PLANS

BESt Investment, the Pep research house, recommends the Perpetual single-company Pep invested in British Telecom. Rolls-Royce is another more recent favourite. Fidelity, another BESt Investment recommendation, offers clients a choice between investing in Vodafone for growth (as the dividend is marginal) and Shell for income (as the dividend is more substantial). Barclays Stockbrokers is suggesting Shell.

SELF-SELECT

When choosing a self-select-single-company Pep, check the charges. Some have low set-up fees but high ones for dealing. So if you are likely to trade on a regular basis you will want a plan with low dealing charges. The NatWest single-company Pep allows you to buy or sell over the phone. It charges 1.5 per cent for dealing and has an annual management fee of 0.6 per cent.

Jeremy Batstone, of NatWest Stockbrokers, believes some of the stock market sectors that have recently performed strongly have run out of steam. "Financials have already been rerated. They have ridden the crest of the wave from the mid-1980s on the basis of earnings improvements and that is reflected in share prices now." He favours engineering and property companies, particularly medium-sized ones such as Tarmac, Barratt Developments, Slough Estates and GKN.

HYBRID SCHEMES

Capital-protected Peps are periodically launched from Dublin. They have a fixed life, track the capital growth of a variety of indices and use swaps as well as options to protect the value of the capital. Current ones include HSBC global protection, which runs for five and a half years, and Legal & General growth and protection Pep, for six years. The drawback to L&G's plan is that the maximum return is capped at double the money you put in.

CONTACTS

Barclays Stockbrokers: 0345-777 4000
BESt Investments: 0171-321 0100
Fidelity Investments: 0800-414 171
NatWest Stockbrokers: 0171-895 5600
Perpetual Portfolio Management: 01491-416 123

Hurry, while the tax break lasts

nothing wrong with a tracker for anyone who does not want to have any imagination or worry about their investments." But, "unless life stops here", smaller capitalisation stocks are now due for a rerating.

The Johnson Fry Slater growth trust, run by Mark Slater, Mr Slater's son, focuses on smaller companies. It has never been far from the top of the Pep league tables recently and the Slater argument is persuasive. The strong run in FTSE 250 middling-size stocks suggests investors are shying away from the high valuations of the top 100 shares which are driving the performance of the tracker funds.

"That augurs well for this kind of fund or any other one which is operating at the bottom end of the market, as opposed to tracker funds and anything operating at the top end because things don't grow to the sky," says Mr Slater. His verdict? Go for a smaller company fund or self-select Pep with a bias towards smaller company shares.

■ Spread overseas where possible, says Tom Crombie, at Scottish Equitable

A slightly more cautious approach is adopted by Tom Crombie, the chief investment manager at Scottish Equitable, who says that the current state of the markets makes choosing a Pep difficult. The crucial thing to bear in mind is what sort of portfolio you want in five years, he says.

"Personally, I would go for more of an overseas element. It is very easy to fill up a Pep with UK and Europe, but I would go for slightly more Asia, Latin America and emerging markets.

■ The Chase de Vere *Pep Guide* costs £4.95, including postage and package. Proceeds go to the NSPCC. Telephone: 0800-526 692.

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Patrick Collinson finds that in the US things are going a lot

Is it too late to join the American party?



Winners: President Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore triumphant. Wall Street has roared ahead as the economy has grown under their leadership

Five years ago shares in Coca-Cola were trading at $20. This week they were selling for $79. Coca-Cola is not alone — other United States shares such as Microsoft and General Electric have also soared. But few British investors have shared in the fizz on Wall Street, in what has been one of the most costly investment mistakes ever by the investment professionals.

Is it too late to join the party? Some experts say that big US stocks are now trading at prices reminiscent of Tokyo just before it crashed, but others say the party could run on for much longer, especially for smaller companies, and that it's not too late to take the plunge.

Ian Brady, Perpetual's US fund manager, says the remarkable feature of Wall Street in recent months has been how the market has continued to rise despite a steady stream of bad news.

Big stocks such as Compaq, Motorola and Hewlett Packard have all issued profits warnings, and economists are forecasting a sharp slowdown in US economic growth, partly because of the Asian financial crisis. Yet the Dow Jones industrials index has gone from 8,000 to nearly 9,000 since the beginning of this year.

Mr Brady said: "The negatives have been more dramatic, but the market has ignored it and Wall Street has already hit the level that many people were forecasting for the year end. People are talking about corrections or crashes, but they are not acting as if there is going to be one, and most big institutions are still fully invested in the market."

A correction, if it comes, may only be of the order of 10 per cent, or about 900 points off the Dow Jones, says Mr Brady. "The market looks very expensive, but it deserves to be, with low inflation and strong return on equity. You could still see returns of around 8 or 9 per cent this year on US equities."

Duncan Byatt, Gartmore's US fund manager, believes that the bull run in big stocks will run out of steam, but that investors should switch to US small stocks instead.

"It is a long way from being too late. My own view is that the most likely outcome from here is a sideways trading range for big capitalisation stocks and that it will become more of a stockpicker's market. Small capitalisation stocks will do well in a sideways market but the buying windows are likely to be short-lived and it's better to be invested rather that trying to time any such opportunity for yourself."

The US economy is in its eighth year of economic expansion, and there are already signs that profits growth is slowing down sharply. In many areas unemployment has effectively fallen to zero, raising the spectre of wage demands pushing up inflation and interest rates.

Katherine Garrett-Cox, Hill Samuel's head of US equities, said: "On a long-term view, the US bull market has got further to go, but clearly we are coming to the end of what has been a fantastic run."

Unlike Gartmore, Hill Samuel remains keen on big stocks. Ms Garrett-Cox said: "It's true that valuations are compelling and the gap between big and small caps has never been so wide. But as the economy slows, small companies don't have much power to restructure. If a rise in interest rates happens, it will be the kiss of death for smaller companies."

It is worth remembering, however, that when United States fund managers talk about small companies, they are only small in American terms. Wall Street defines a small company as one with a market capitalisation of up to $2 billion, equal to the size of Next or Argos in the United Kingdom.

Investment advisers are generally sanguine on the outlook for US-invested funds. One of the fundamental arguments in favour of North America is that Wall Street makes up more than 40 per cent of all shares traded in the world, and that anybody who wants a global spread of investments should have at least some of their money invested in the US.

Simon Davies of Berry Asset Management said: "Deciding to invest in the US after the rises they have enjoyed has been one of the hardest investment decisions we have ever made. Most of us have waited far too long to go into the market. On a five-year view, we still think it's an appealing story for US companies. The management structure of US companies is better than anywhere else in the world. The Americans have got it right while we in Europe are still struggling."

The key is finding a balanced fund with a mix of small, mid-sized and large cap stocks, says Mr Davies. "You have to worry about a company like Nike. The market seems to be going back to the days of Japan in the late 1980s, when we convinced ourselves that we could pay sixty times profits for a company with little or no earnings growth. I prefer a fund like Fleming Flagship American, which invests across the entire capitalisation range."

Chase de Vere Investments is telling cautious customers to phase in their investments over the next few months. Justin Modray, investment adviser, said: "Over the next few weeks we'll be getting a lot of first-quarter results, which is likely to add to market volatility. It's a good idea to take out a phased investment plan of the type that Fidelity offers."

Charles Levett Scrivener, of Towry Law, says he is relatively negative on the US, but still recommends that an international investor should have at least 10 per cent of his money in the US. "Blue chips are overvalued and we are now entirely in small company stocks," he said.

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The United States has its decade in the sun

What explains the stunning rise in US shares over the past five years? The dramatic turnaround in the US economy has been the big surprise for economists in the 1990s. Ian Brady, Perpetual's US specialist, said: "Every region has its decade in the sun. In the 1980s it was Japan, in the 1990s it is the US. There have been three major growth industries during the 1990s — technology, healthcare and financial services. The US seems to be at the forefront of each."

Another US fund manager, Duncan Byatt, of Gartmore, says that America has enjoyed a productivity revolution, brought on by technological innovations such as the Internet. As a result, profitability has shot up, with the top 500 US companies enjoying earnings growth of about 20 per cent annually for the past three years. Corporate debt levels have fallen, and the cost of servicing the debt has fallen even faster as interest rates have declined.

Soaring profits are more than enough to sustain a bull run on the stock market. But another ingredient in Wall Street's phenomenal bull run has been the success of "(401(K)" plans, the US equivalent of employer-sponsored group personal pensions.

Money going into the 401(K)s has added to the more than three trillion dollars (equal to the output of the entire UK economy for three years) which has funnelled into mutual funds, and a large amount of that money has in turn been invested in the easily traded big stocks.

In a further twist, big companies have begun "share buyback" programmes which have reduced the amount of shares available. In a case of textbook economics, demand has soared, and supply has been restricted: inevitably share prices have jumped.

The flood of money into US shares shows no signs of letting up. Money flows into mutual funds are still running at more than $4.5 billion a week and small US investors are not inclined to put their money anywhere other than on Wall Street. Katherine Garrett-Cox, of Hill Samuel, said: "Money flows will not slow. US investors are terrified of the Far East and they have lost money in Latin America. The behaviour of millions of domestic US investors is the key; they know that the social security system is basically bust and that they will have to provide for themselves. If the British suddenly started to invest heavily in US stocks it would cause no more than a ripple in the market."

The major risk to Wall Street is the potential for a rise in interest rates throwing the "Goldilocks" scenario into reverse. Currently low bond yields support high equity prices, and a rise in interest rates is likely to lead to a sell-off in bond markets which will hit equities.

However, some fund managers believe the reverse could happen. Ted Francis, of Royal SunAlliance, says bond yields of about 6 per cent are still much higher than inflation at 1.5-2 per cent. If bond yields take a lurch downwards, "we could really see a valuation bubble of the size that we saw in Japan," he said.

A second risk haunting Wall Street is a fall in corporate profits. Gartmore's Duncan Byatt is pencilling in earnings growth at big companies of just 4-5 per cent in 1998 after three hectic years of growth. Unemployment in several industries is falling fast, and the pressure for wage rises is building up.

But Ms Garrett-Cox is relaxed about the coming slowdown in the US economy. "I was in New York last week and although the equity strategists are not enthusiastic about the market, neither do they think there is going to be a massive correction, because the numbers on inflation, interest rates and liquidity are still positive. I even met one strategist who said the market could go to 12,000 before it finally runs out of steam."

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Rights advice for pensioners

More than a million older people could be boosting their annual pension by claiming benefits that they are entitled to, benefits which add up to £1.7 billion in unclaimed money. Age Concern is targeting this group of pensioners, many of whom do not claim income support because of confusion or apprehension at the complex procedures, a feeling of stigma or a lack of awareness of eligibility.

Your Rights Week, which runs until April 9, is an attempt to steer pensioners through the benefits maze. In particular, Age Concern hopes to encourage the 60 per cent of disabled older people in private households to claim attendance allowance which would double their present income. For help and advice, telephone Age Concern on 0800 009966 (7am-7pm until April 9). Callers will receive a free information pack and can also order *Your Rights*, priced £3.99, a guide to money benefits for older people.

Your Rights 1998/9 discusses housing and council tax benefits, income support, paying for fuel, insulation and repairs and getting help with legal and health costs. Also available from bookshops.

☐ The new individual savings account (Isa) is discussed in a free booklet produced by Liverpool Victoria, the friendly society, written in response to feedback from its customers. According to Liverpool Victoria, there is still confusion about Isas, how they will work and how existing savings arrangements will be affected. A free information service has also been set up to give savers further advice and regular updates on how Isas are taking shape. For a free copy of the guide, or to register for the information service, call 0800 448811.

☐ First National, the Irish Republic's largest building society, is to change its name to First Active, a move that will take effect across all companies within the group. First National announced its intention to become a bank in September last year and the change of name will form part of the conversion resolutions on which the society's members will vote at the forthcoming annual meeting in Dublin on May 18. The society hopes to float in the autumn of this year on the Irish and London Stock Exchanges.

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SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Standard Life Bank 0345 555657	Direct Access	InstantT	£1	6.96	Yly
Scottish Widows Bank 0845 8450829	Instant Access	InstantB	£100	7.00	Yly
Safeway 0800 995995	Direct Savings	InstantB	£1,000	7.30	Yly
Northern Rock 0845 600 6767	Save Direct Inst	InstantB	£5,000	7.80	Yly

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Scarborough BS 01723 500616	Scarborough 30	30 day	£1,000	7.60	Yly
Bristol & West 0800 202121	Postal 30	30 day P	£10,000	7.80	Yly
Legal & General Bank 0500 111200	60 Direct 4	60 day B	£10,000	8.00	Yly
Investec Bank (UK) 0171 203 1650	Base Plus	1 year	£2,001	8.00	Yly

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Norwich & Peterborough 01733 372222		5 year	£100	8.00	Yly
Bradford & Bingley BS 0800 592588		5 year	£500	8.00	Yly
Darlington BS 01325 366366		5 year	£1,000	8.00	Yly
Britannia BS 0800 132304		5 year	£3,000	8.00	Yly

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.57%N	6.90%N	Nil
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.64%N	7.90%N	Nil
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.69%NC	8.60%N	Nil

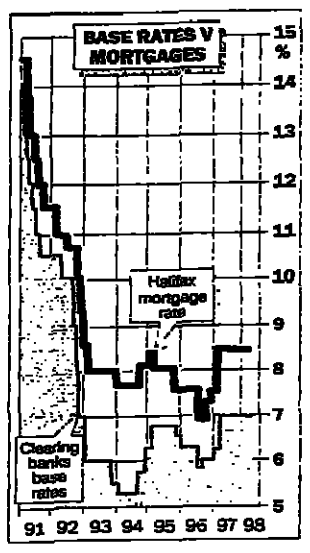
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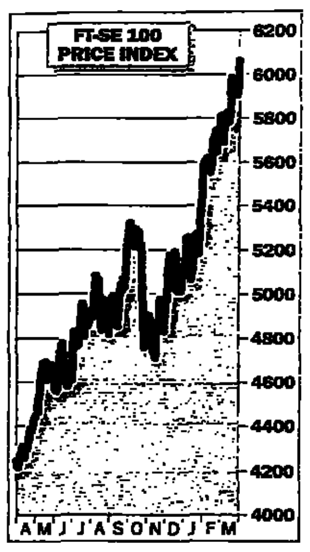
PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £5,000 for 3yrs with insurance	no insurance
Northern Rock 0345 421421	9.90%H	£183.13	£166.11
Yorkshire Bank 0800 202122	12.50%	£190.33	£165.77
Direct Line 0181 680 9966	12.80%A	£183.75	£166.38

NB. A = Minimum age 22 years, B = Operated by post or telephone, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate, H = If insurance not arranged APR 12.7 per cent, N = Introductory rate for a limited period, P = Operated by Post, T = Operated by Telephone.

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Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 677)





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	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investment £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c[1]	2.00	1.60	1.20	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*s	4.75	3.80	2.85	1-499**	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond*s	7.00	5.60	4.20	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bond	6.50	5.20	3.90	1-250,000**		0645 645000
46th Issue Certt	4.80			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bondt	6.00			25-1,000	8day	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bonds	6.00	4.80	3.60	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
13th Ind Linkedt	2.25			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S5	6.10	4.88	3.66	500-50,000	60day	0645 645000

¹ first £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, inst accs for up to £100 · Unlimited additional hldgs for reinvested proceeds †Tax free *Rates gross and vble ‡Guaranteed when held for 5 years §0.2% net bonus for £20,000+ ¶£100,000 jt in addition to S1, S2, S3 and S4 holdings *Taxable but cred in full †£500-100,000 earn higher rates **Tiered rates apply

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Sun Life ....Level	£ 8,640	£ 9,772	£11,298
Canada Life ....Level	£ 8,515	£ 9,692	£11,388
Commercial Un....Level	£ 8,322	£ 9,632	£11,362
Standard Life ....Level	£ 8,516	£ 9,620	£11,048
Legal & General...Level	£ 8,520	£ 9,563	£10,879

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Norwich Union.....Level	£7,827	£ 8,649	£ 9,863
Sun Life ....Level	£7,810	£ 8,631	£ 9,812
Canada Life ....Level	£7,790	£ 8,630	£ 9,843
Generali ....Level	£7,658	£ 8,601	£ 9,891
Equitable Life.......Level	£7,810	£ 8,552	£ 9,662

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60 / Female: Age 55	Age 65 / Age 60	Age 70 / Age 65
Sun Life ....Level	£7,405	£8,056	£ 8,962
Equitable Life.......Level	£7,435	£8,021	£ 8,842
Norwich Union.....Level	£7,360	£7,995	£ 8,768
Generali ....Level	£7,271	£7,942	£ 8,856
Prudential ....Level	£7,382	£7,905	£ 8,674

Source: Annuity Direct (0171 684 5000)

Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME
Rates as at April 2, 1998

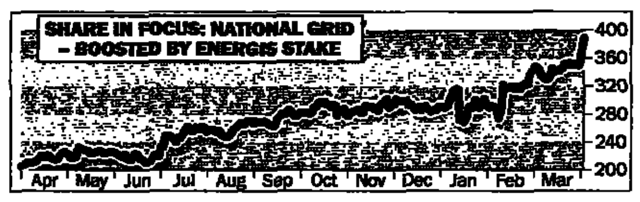
	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	4.75
	5,000	AIG Life	6.22
	10,000	GE Fin Assur	6.50
2 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.35
	3,000	ITT Lon & Edin	5.95
	5,000	AIG Life	6.00
	10,000	GE Fin Assur	6.32
3 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.30
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	6.05
	20,000	Hambro Assured	5.95
	50,000	Hambro Assured	6.05
4 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.40
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	5.90
5 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.30
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	5.80

Source: Chamberlain de Broë 0171-493 7900. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	132.00	7.10	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	161.00	7.22	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	177.25	7.33	100.20	10,000
Britannia	13.000%	182.25	7.13	100.42	1,000
Coventry	12.125%	171.75	7.06	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	163.00	7.21	100.25	10,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	191.50	6.98	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	156.75	6.86	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	182.50	6.92	100.45	1,000
Skipton	12.875%	188.75	6.82	100.48	1,000
PERPETUAL SUBORDINATED BONDS					
Chelt & Gloucester	11.750%	166.00	7.08	100.98	50,000
Halifax	8.750%	121.00	7.23	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	157.00	7.64	100.28	50,000
Halifax	13.630%	193.00	7.06	100.00	50,000
Bristol & West	13.380%	183.75	7.28	100.34	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	174.50	7.23	100.14	1,000

PIBS=Permanent interest-bearing shares. *Source:* Greenwich NatWest



LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Bank of Ireland 01189 684300	0.99	£20-145k	95	Fixed 6 mths More dscs, £280 fee
Northern Rock[1] 0845 6050500	3.89	to £250k	95	Fixed to 1.9.00 £395 fee
Alliance & Leic 0345 108108	4.75	£20-300k	75	Fixed to 1.5.00 0.5% fee, £300 max
Halifax 01422 333333	4.95	no max	90	Fixed to 31.8.00 £295 fee
Woolwich[2] 0181 298 5831	4.99	£15-250k	95	Fixed to 1.4.00 £350 fee

NB. ¹ compulsory products, buildings and contents insurance. ² buildings insurance only.

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Scarborough 0990 133149	0.10	to £150k	80	8.59% dsc-1 yr £125 fee
Hinckley & Rugby 0800 774499	0.10	£1-150k	80	8.54% dsc-1 yr £250 fee
Mansfield 01246 202055	0.50	£25-175k	95	8% disc-6 mths, more dscs apply
Bank of Ireland 0118 9884300	0.99	£20-145k	95	Fixed 6 mths, more dscs, £280 fee
Leeds & Holbeck[1] 0113 225 7777	1.45	to £180k	95	7% dsc-6 mths, more discs apply

NB. ¹ Compulsory products, buildings and contents insurance.

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Bank of Ireland 01189 684300	0.99	£20-145k	95	Fix 6 mths, more dscs, £280 fee
Bristol & West 0800 119955	3.49	no max	95	Fix to 1.4.99 £295 fee
Newbury 01635 43676	5.10	£30-100k	95	3% disc-12 mnths
Wesleyan Loans 0121 2003003	5.35	to £100k	95	3.25% disc 12 mnths
Alliance & Leic[1] 0345 108108	5.69	£20-300k	95	Fixed to 1.5.00 £150 fee

NB. ¹ Compulsory products, buildings and contents insurance
Larger lenders, loans and first-time buyers tables by Blay's Guides Ltd (01753 880482)

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UNIT-LINKED INSURANCE INVESTMENTS

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
AEGON LIFE ASSURANCE Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh, EH12 9SE 0131 339 9191				
Balanced	628.90	665.60	+3.30	...
UK Equity	903.60	956.20	-9.90	...
Property	482.80	511.00	-0.10	...
Fixed Interest	375.60	397.50	+3.40	.
Money	285.90	302.60	+0.30	...
International	512.70	542.60	+2.10	...
ABBEY LIFE Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth BH8 8AL 01202 292373				
Custodian S4	231.70	243.90	+2.00	..
Ethical S4	204.70	215.50	+3.50	...
International S4	242.90	255.70	+2.70	...
Protected Gth S4	135.10	142.30	+1.40	...
Asian Pacific	155.80	164.00	-6.40	...
European S4	317.70	334.50	-10.20	...
Prop Fd Ser 4	462.10	486.50	-0.20	
Equity Ser 4	358.20	377.10	+6.40	...
Man Ser 4	950.60	1000.70	+12.30	...
Conv Ser 4	375.30	395.10	+0.40	...
Money Ser 4	374.80	394.60	+0.30	...
Fixed Int Ser 4	463.80	488.30	+4.40	...
American Ser 4	940.10	989.60	+21.40	...
High Inc Ser 4	1113.80	1172.50	+23.30	...
Indexed Inv Ser 4	267.70	281.80	-2.90	...
Japan Ser 4	226.50	238.50	-11.80	...
Formerly Hill Samuel Life Assurance Ltd				
Security Fund	910.60	963.60	-14.10	..
British Fund	988.20	1045.80	-13.40	...
International	802.30	849.00	+14.70	...
Dollar Fund	766.90	811.60	-23.60	...
Capital Fund	763.80	808.30	+10.00	...
Income Fund	1221.10	1292.20	+17.30	...
Property Series A	588.10	622.40	...	4.70
Property Units	983.90	1033.10	+0.10	.
Financial Fund	1206.80	1277.10	+10.00	...
Managed Ser A	831.30	879.70	+9.30	...
Managed Units	1505.90	1585.20	-16.90	...
High Yield Fund	1095.50	1159.30	-13.30	...
Money Series A	331.80	351.20	+0.50	...
Money Units	445.40	468.90	+0.50	...
Equity Fund	973.10	1029.80	+11.80	...
Fixed Interest	495.50	524.40	-5.00	...
Indexed Secs	231.80	245.30	-2.70	...
European Fund	1291.30	1366.50	+26.00	.
Natural Res	263.60	279.00	-3.80	.
Far East Fund	459.90	486.70	-20.70	...
Smaller Cos	775.90	821.10	-5.00	...
Special Sits	869.90	920.60	-0.90	...
Man Currency	296.90	314.20	+2.10	...
Japanese Tech	224.20	237.30	-3.30	...
US Smaller Cos	578.70	612.40	-21.90	.
Formerly Target Life Assurance Co. Ltd				
Deposit	282.80	297.70	+0.30	...
Financial Ser 1	99.30	104.60	+0.90	...
Fixed Interest	418.80	440.90	+4.50	...
Gold	66.50	70.00	-1.20	...
Managed	909.80	957.70	+7.00	...
Mngd Growth	293.40	308.90	+3.30	...
Property	399.50	420.60	+0.70	...
Residential Prop	126.00	132.70	-0.10	...
TSB American	436.20	459.20	+12.50	...
TSB Brit Gwth	1515.30	1595.10	-20.20	...
TSB European	473.90	498.90	+8.40	...
TSB Income	704.90	742.00	+9.60	...
TSB Ind	606.00	637.90	+10.00	...
TSB Pacific	321.00	337.90	-13.80	...
ALLIED DUNBAR ASSURANCE Swindon SN1 1EL 01793 514514				
Fxd Int Dep Acc	428.40	451.00	+0.50	...
Equity Acc	2193.60	2309.10	-18.30	...
Property Acc	779.30	820.40	+0.70	...
Far East Acc	246.70	259.70	-10.00	...
Managed Capital	743.50	782.70	+5.70	...
-do- Acc	1634.80	1720.90	+13.00	...
Overseas Acc	1627.40	1713.10	+25.60	...
Gilt Edged Acc	653.30	687.70	+6.60	...
Amer Equity Acc	1535.50	1616.40	-43.30	...
Amer Man Acc	634.10	667.50	-16.90	.
Amer Prop Acc	131.40	138.40	+1.60	...
Distribution Bonds	29.40	31.00	+0.10	..
AXA EQUITY & LAW LIFE ASSURANCE Amersham Road, High Wycombe, Bucks 01494 463463				
Reserve Ser 6	193.30	203.70	+0.70	...
Balced Ser 6	1087.70	1145.00	+9.00	...
Opportunity Ser 6	257.80	271.40	+3.20	...
Distribution Ser 6	119.40	125.70	+1.00	5.87
UK Equities Ser 6	1720.40	1811.00	+18.10	...
Higher Inc Ser 6	1845.00	1942.20	+23.20	...
North Amer Ser 6	768.70	809.20	-19.70	...
Far East Ser 6	437.00	460.00	-23.00	...
Europe Ser 6	704.00	741.10	+15.30	...
Intnl Ser 6	790.00	831.60	+5.50	...
Property Ser 6	640.00	673.70	+0.70	...
Fixed Int Ser 6	553.50	582.70	+3.70	...
Ind-Lnkd Sec S6	230.20	242.40	+2.60	...
Gteed Dep Ser 6	341.60	359.60	+0.30	...
BARCLAYS LIFE 252 Romford Road, London E7 9JB 0181 534 5544				
Equity Acc	1492.10	1570.70	-32.00	...
-do- Initial	876.90	923.10	+18.80	...
Gilt Edged Acc	519.60	547.00	+4.10	...
-do- Initial	308.00	324.30	+2.40	...
International Acc	522.10	549.60	+5.60	...
-do- Initial	307.60	323.80	+3.30	...
Managed Acc	798.40	840.50	+12.40	...
-do- Initial	472.00	496.90	+7.30	...
Money Acc	332.90	350.50	+0.30	...
Property Acc	357.50	376.40	+0.50	...
-do- Initial	212.00	223.20	+0.10	...
America Acc	549.70	578.70	+16.40	...
Far East Gwth	166.50	175.30	-10.20	...
Financial Acc	684.60	724.90	+17.70	...
500 Accum	626.00	659.00	+2.00	...
Japan Acc	168.80	177.70	-15.70	...
Income Acc	865.90	911.50	+16.90	...
Special Sits Acc	462.70	487.10	+9.30	...
Univ Tech Acc	224.10	235.90	+3.10	..

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
BLACK HORSE LIFE Mountbatten House, Chatham, Kent ME4 4JF 01634 834000				
The Managed Fd	1206.30	1206.30	+15.01	...
Income Fund	1255.64	1321.73	+23.71	...
Extra Income	1134.20	1193.90	+18.97	...
Worldwide Gth	683.82	719.82	+2.77	...
Balanced Fund	1105.02	1163.18	+18.20	...
Smllr Cos Recov	1213.18	1277.04	+3.06	...
N Amer & Genrl	639.15	672.79	+7.26	...
Pacific Basin	287.34	302.47	-16.75	...
German Growth	366.11	385.38	+0.29	...
Japan Growth	123.72	130.24	-3.86	...
The UK Gth Fd	358.06	376.91	+6.19	...
Contl Euro Gth	225.18	237.04	+0.10	...
Property Fund	458.66	482.80	+1.72	...
Fixed Interest	434.17	457.03	+2.89	...
Cash Fund	323.24	340.26	+0.32	...
Managed Inv	712.48	749.98	+9.00	...
Nth Amer Recov	401.38	422.51	+6.57	...
BRITANNIA 50 Bothwell St, Glasgow G2 6HR 0141 248 2000				
Measured Perf	252.90	267.60	+5.40	...
Performance Plus	292.80	309.80	+9.40	...
With Profit Perf	203.20	215.00	+0.30	...
UK Opportunity	353.20	373.70	+11.30	...
Euro Opportunity	386.40	408.90	+16.30	...
North Amer Opp	330.20	349.30	+10.80	...
Far East Opp	169.60	179.50	-7.30	...
Gwth Prop Ser 1	186.60	198.50	...	...
Gth Prop Ser 2	247.90	262.30	+3.10	...
Fixed Int	267.90	283.40	+1.60	...
Cash	180.90	191.30	+0.10	6.49
Overseas	337.40	357.10	+10.90	...
Formerly LAS				
Managed Fund	529.80	557.70	+11.30	...
UK Equity	1068.50	1124.80	+33.80	...
Property	342.10	360.20	+4.30	...
Money Market	286.70	301.80	+0.20	..
Fixed Interest	389.10	409.60	+2.30	...
Japan	245.20	258.20	-9.10	...
North America	293.80	309.30	+9.60	...
International	521.40	548.90	+16.70	...
European	494.20	520.30	+20.60	...
Far East	125.60	132.30	-5.40	...
CANADA LIFE 2-6 High Street, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5BA 01707 51122				
Managed	491.70	517.60	+6.00	...
Property	318.00	334.80	+11.70	...
Gilt & Fxd Int	307.40	323.60	+0.40	...
Equity	634.10	667.50	+8.80	...
Cash	244.50	257.40	+0.20	...
CLife Euro Mgd	610.40	642.63	+5.23	...
CLife Intl Fd	407.60	429.10	+3.50	...
Managed Fund	1049.80	1105.10	+12.90	...
Property Fund	637.50	671.10	+11.80	...
Equity Fund	1564.90	1647.30	+21.80	...
Gilt Edged Fd	793.10	834.80	+1.10	...
Deposit Fund	377.30	397.20	+0.30	...
Investment Fd	705.90	741.10	+12.70	...
International	648.80	682.90	+5.60	...
Formerly Albany Life				
UK Equity	2464.30	2593.90	+31.50	...
Merc European	686.50	722.60	+20.50	...
Merc Fxd Int	655.70	690.10	+6.90	...
Gtd Money	381.40	401.40	+0.30	...
Mercury Intl Mgd	908.50	956.30	+1.60	...
Merc Int Fxd Int	385.50	405.70	+2.80	...
Mercury Japan	188.00	197.80	-13.50	...
Merc Nth Amer	572.10	602.20	+14.30	...
UK Property	527.20	554.90	+2.00	...
Merc Multip Inv	1472.20	1549.70	-13.70	...
CITY OF WESTMINSTER ASSURANCE Sentry House, 500 Avebury Blvd, Milton Keynes MK9 2NU. 01908 606101				
Property Fund	214.50	225.80	-13.20	...
Managed Fund	966.20	1017.10	+9.30	...
Equity Fund	625.60	658.60	-10.20	...
CLERICAL MEDICAL/FIDELITY INVESTMENTS Narrow Plain, Bristol BS2 0JH. 0117 9290566				
Assurance Funds				
Sapphire Mixed	431.10	453.80	+3.30	...
Ruby	229.20	241.30	...	...
Emerald	180.30	189.80	+1.10	...
Equity	554.00	583.20	+4.50	...
Property	263.00	276.90	+0.20	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	270.40	284.70	+2.40	...
Indexed Secs	213.10	224.40	+2.10	...
Cash	213.60	224.90	+0.20	...
Nth American	436.30	459.30	+14.60	...
Far East	223.90	235.70	-6.60	...
International	319.80	336.70	-3.00	...
Special Sits	585.20	616.00	+1.50	...
Intl Income	519.80	547.20	+5.70	...
European	610.20	642.40	+13.70	...
Japanese	89.20	94.00	-3.30	...
SE Asia	312.20	328.70	-11.30	...
With Profits Reg	201.90	212.60	+0.20	...
-do- Spec	201.90	212.60	-0.20	...
Flexible Retirement Plans Funds				
Mixed	518.30	545.60	+5.80	...
Equity	717.60	755.40	+9.90	...
Property	250.50	263.70	+0.30	...
Gilt & Fixed Int	360.60	379.60	+4.00	...
Index Linked	231.90	244.20	+2.90	...
Cash	298.40	314.20	+0.50	...
Nth American	553.20	584.50	+24.30	...
Far East Acc	232.00	244.30	-9.70	...
International Acc	402.20	423.40	+5.40	...
Special Sits	894.70	941.80	+2.80	...
European Flex	908.70	956.60	+22.70	...
COLONIAL MUTUAL GROUP Colonial Mutual House, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4YY. 01634 890 000				
(Unitsr Key)	260.20	...	...	...
-do- Pacemaker	460.10	...	...	...
-do- Cash	229.31	241.38	+0.21	...
-do- Equity	863.65	909.11	-0.45	...
-do- Fxd Int	461.43	485.72	-0.74	...
-do- Managed	595.99	627.36	-0.58	...
-do- Property	472.19	497.04	-0.04	...
(Pensk Cash Cap	221.45	233.11	+0.14	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
-do- Cash Inv	364.28	383.46	+0.49	...
-do- Equity Cap	2282.49	2402.63	+23.19	...
-do- Equity Inv	3754.62	3952.25	+40.78	...
-do- Fixed Cap	500.04	526.36	+4.60	...
-do- Fixed Inv	822.55	865.85	+8.15	...
-do- Index Cap	240.20	252.86	+2.66	...
-do- Index Inv	395.13	415.94	+4.65	...
-do- Mngd Cap	883.95	930.49	+8.68	...
-do- Mngd Inv	1454.08	1530.62	+15.30	...
COMMERCIAL UNION St Helen's, 1 Undershaft, EC3 0171 283 7500				
Var Ann Acc (5)	1330.23	...	-8.28	...
Var Ann (5)	141.86	...	-0.92	...
Prime: Managed	603.90	635.70	+4.90	...
Prime: UK Equity	844.50	889.00	+8.40	...
Prime: Int Equity	377.90	397.80	+1.60	...
Prime: Property	284.90	299.90	+0.40	...
Prime: Fxd Int	293.70	309.20	+2.70	...
Prime Index-Lnk	212.20	223.40	+2.20	...
Prime: Cash	234.70	247.10	+0.20	...
CONFEDERATION LIFE Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2NN 01438 744840				
Managed Fund	1607.40	1692.00	+33.30	...
Equity II	2594.90	2731.40	+74.10	...
EAGLE STAR LIFE ASSURANCE Montpellier Drive, Cheltenham, GL53 7LQ. 01242 221311				
Life Funds				
Ut With Pfts (5&6)	121.40	...	+0.20	...
Secure (2)	114.30	...	+0.10	...
Managed (3)	143.50	...	+1.30	...
Equity Mngd (3)	144.60	...	+1.60	...
Adventurous (3)	131.50	...	+2.00	...
Bristol & West (2)	116.60	...	+0.20	...
Equity Mgd S1	350.00	368.50	+3.90	...
Managed S1	345.00	363.20	+3.30	...
Adventurous S1	269.80	284.10	+4.10	...
Managed (2)	234.80	247.20	+2.30	...
Eagle/Mid Uts	465.20	482.10	+5.10	0.01
Pension Funds				
Unit With Pfts (5)	122.60	...	+0.20	...
Secure (2)	115.90	...	+0.20	...
Managed (2)	146.70	...	+1.60	...
Equity Mngd (2)	150.90	...	+1.90	...
Adventurous (2)	133.60	...	+2.40	...
Bristol & West (2)	118.50	...	+0.20	...
FRIENDS' PROVIDENT Castle Street, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 3SH 01722 413366				
Managed	473.10	498.00	+8.70	...
UK Equity	695.20	731.80	-13.30	...
Stewardship	552.90	582.00	+2.80	...
Overseas Equity	422.70	445.00	+8.70	...
North American	269.30	283.50	+7.20	...
Pacific Basin	117.20	123.40	-3.90	...
European	455.40	479.40	+12.20	...
Property	214.70	226.10	+1.00	...
Fixed Interest	312.60	329.10	+2.40	...
Index Linked	212.00	223.20	+2.60	...
Cash	231.20	243.40	+0.20	...
FP Life Assurance ex NM				
Fixed Interest	687.80	724.00	+4.30	...
Managed	1078.50	1135.20	+20.30	...
Deposit	395.90	416.70	+0.40	...
Property	597.50	628.90	+2.80	...
American	764.60	804.80	+23.10	...
Australian	679.10	714.80	-6.70	...
European	1141.20	1201.20	+34.70	...
Income Acc	1266.50	1333.10	+24.10	...
-do- Dist	686.40	722.50	+13.80	3.97
International	456.00	480.00	+10.00	...
Japan Smaller	243.70	256.50	-13.50	...
Singapore & Mal	278.00	292.60	-10.70	...
Tokyo Fund	509.80	536.60	-14.70	...
UK Equity	976.70	1028.10	+21.50	...
CCM Vanged Mg	1150.00	1210.50	+16.80	...
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD Alban Gate, 14th Flr, 125 London Wall, Lond EC2Y 5AS. 0171 710 4567				
GT Plan Far East	237.30	249.80	-7.10	...
GT Plan Wwide	625.90	658.90	+6.20	...
GAN LIFE & PENSIONS Gan House, Harlow, Essex CM20 2EW. 01279 626262				
Portfolio Acc	926.50	926.50	-14.60	..
-do- Inv A	926.40	975.20	+15.30	...
UK Equity	656.30	690.90	-10.70	...
Gilt Plus	252.70	266.10	+2.20	...
Managed	424.30	446.80	+7.20	...
GENERAL ACCIDENT 2 Rougier St, York YO1 1HR. 01904 628982				
Managed	312.00	328.30	+2.70	...
Unitised Profit	172.80	181.90	+0.20	...
UK Equity	496.10	522.10	+5.50	...
Fixed Int	247.70	260.60	-1.90	...
Index-Linked	205.40	216.10	+2.30	...
Cash Deposit	198.50	208.90	+0.20	...
Property	211.10	222.20	+3.60	...
International	240.30	252.80	+3.40	...
American	308.50	324.70	+8.20	...
Japan	161.90	170.30	-10.70	...
Japan Smllr Cos	165.80	174.40	-10.90	...
European	310.30	326.60	+5.80	...
Pacific Fund	197.20	207.50	-8.80	...
Conv Life	200.60	211.10	+2.20	...
Formerly Provident Mutual				
Managed Ord	713.00	750.50	+6.30	...
Managed Initial	431.50	454.20	+3.60	...
Equity Ord	1255.00	1321.10	+14.00	...
Equity Init	759.50	799.50	+8.00	...
I-Linked Gilt Ord	250.50	263.70	+2.80	...
I-Linked Gilt Init	158.40	166.70	+1.60	...
Oseas Equity Ord	483.50	508.90	+2.40	...
Oseas Equity Init	292.60	308.00	+1.30	...
Property Ord	328.20	345.50	+5.60	...
Property Init	198.60	209.10	+3.30	...
Fixed Int Ord	362.40	381.50	+2.90	...
Fixed Int Init	219.30	230.80	+1.50	...
Deposit Ord	237.00	249.50	+0.30	...
Deposit Initial	143.40	150.90	+0.10	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
GUARDIAN ROYAL EXCHANGE Royal Exchange London EC3. 0171 283 7101				
Ass Prop Bds	993.80	1035.20	+6.60	...
Managed Initial	656.00	690.60	+11.40	...
-do- Acc	1005.20	1058.10	+17.40	...
Equity Initial	1120.40	1179.40	+22.20	...
-do- Acc	1716.70	1807.00	+34.00	...
Fixed Int Initial	537.90	566.20	+4.70	...
-do- Acc	824.10	867.50	+7.10	...
Intl Initial	563.80	593.40	-13.00	...
-do- Acc	863.80	909.30	+20.00	...
Nth Amer Initial	331.80	349.30	+13.00	..
-do- Acc	462.60	487.00	+18.00	...
Pacific Initial	144.00	151.60	-6.90	...
-do- Acc	198.90	209.40	-9.50	...
Property Initial	204.90	215.70	+1.60	...
-do- Acc	313.90	330.40	+2.40	...
Index-Lnkd Inkl	189.00	198.90	+1.80	...
-do- Acc	263.50	277.40	+2.60	...
Deposit Initial	211.80	222.90	+0.20	...
-do- Acc	324.50	341.60	+0.30	...
Euro Initial	173.00	182.20	+6.00	...
-do- Acc	223.00	234.70	+7.60	...
HALIFAX LIFE LTD PO Box 285, York YO1 1YB 01904 611110				
Life Funds				
Foundation	38.33	40.35	+0.33	...
Balanced	38.36	40.38	+0.20	...
Opportunity	39.46	41.54	+0.38	...
Deposit	27.08	28.51	+0.04	...
Pension Funds				
Foundation S2	30.43	32.03	+0.27	...
Balanced S2	30.82	32.44	+0.21	...
Opportunity S2	30.36	31.96	+0.28	...
Deposit S2	25.58	26.93	+0.04	...
HAMBRO ASSURED Harbour House, Portway, Preston, Lancs PR2 2PR. 01772 840000				
Managed	252.40	265.60	+2.60	...
-do- Pens	336.50	354.20	+3.80	...
UK Equity	298.40	314.10	+6.60	...
-do- Pens	381.90	402.00	+10.00	...
International	191.50	201.50	-1.40	...
-do- Pens	216.20	227.50	-1.90	.:.
Deposit	159.40	167.70	+0.10	...
-do- Pens	196.70	207.00	+0.20	...
For Hill Samuel see Abbey Life Assurance				
IRISH LIFE ASSURANCE Irish Life Centre, Victoria Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 5TF. 01727 48181				
Global Managed	858.40	903.60	...	..
Global Property	353.30	371.90	...	..
Global Fixed Int	669.80	705.10	...	...
Global Equity	950.60	1000.60	...	...
Global Cash	244.40	257.30	...	...
LEGAL & GENERAL UNIT ASSURANCE 2 Montefiore Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 1SE 01273 824000				
B Soc Lnkd Unit	134.80	141.90	...	...
-do- Acc	205.10	215.90	+0.20	...
Brit Opps Inv	227.30	239.30	-1.40	...
-do- Acc	311.80	328.30	+2.70	...
Cash Initial	173.60	182.80	-0.40	...
-do- Acc	330.40	347.80	+0.10	...
Equity Initial	1061.40	1117.30	+11.30	...
-do- Acc	2019.60	2125.90	+26.70	...
Fixed Initial	408.90	430.50	+1.70	...
-do- Acc	778.10	819.10	+5.40	...
Index-Lnkd Gilt	156.00	164.30	+1.20	..
-do- Acc	253.30	266.70	+2.50	...
Intl Initial	376.70	396.60	+1.60	...
-do- Acc	705.70	742.90	+4.90	..
Managed Initial	652.40	686.80	-4.50	...
-do- Acc	1241.40	1306.80	+11.90	...
Property Initial	242.00	254.80	-0.20	...
-do- Acc	460.50	484.80	+0.90	...
LINCOLN The Quays, 101-105 Oxford Road, Uxbridge, Middx UB8 1LZ 01895 200 200				
Equity Units	£225.61		+257.00	...
Property Units	3357.00	3533.00	+18.00	...
Bal Bd Exec Unit	9654.00	£101.62	+83.00	...
2nd Equity Acc	1061.00	1117.00	+13.00	...
2nd High Inc Ac	1012.00	1065.00	+6.00	...
2nd Property Acc	300.60	316.30	+1.60	...
2nd Mngd 2 Acc	225.10	236.80	+1.40	...
2nd Mngd 3 Acc	668.60	703.60	+5.70	...
2nd Mngd 4 Acc	303.70	319.60	+2.20	..
2nd Deposit Acc	323.90	340.90	+0.30	...
2nd Gilt Acc	389.30	409.70	-2.80	...
2nd Amer Acc	1152.00	1213.00	+21.00	.
2nd Intl Mny Acc	246.70	259.60	+1.10	
2nd Index Acc	254.70	268.00	+2.40	..
2nd Far East Acc	255.60	269.00	-11.10	..
2nd Global Acc	203.30	213.90	+1.30	..
2nd Euro Acc	274.20	288.50	+7.90	..
2nd Japan Acc	105.70	111.20	-6.90	..
2nd Int Cr Bd Acc	176.00	185.10	-0.70	..
2nd Cap Gth Acc	195.30	205.40	+2.30	..
ex-Laurentian				
Property	640.30	673.90	+3.40	...
Managed	601.00	632.50	+5.10	...
American	686.00	722.00	+12.30	...
UK Equity Fd	770.80	811.30	-9.20	...
Japan	116.40	122.40	-7.80	...
Index-Lkd	228.10	240.00	+2.10	...
High Yield	1406.00	1480.00	+8.00	...
Money	460.20	484.30	+0.40	...
International	456.90	480.90	+3.10	...
Perpetual Active	434.40	457.20	+2.60	...
Growth Acc	939.70	989.00	+8.00	..
Gilt Edged	551.50	580.40	+3.90	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
European	250.20	263.30	+7.30	...
Far East	135.20	142.20	-5.90	...
LONDON LIFE Spectrum, Bond Street, Bristol, BS1 3AL 0117 984 7777				
Equity	1503.30	...	+15.20	...
Fixed Interest	573.50	...	+4.80	...
Property	512.10	...	-2.60	...
Deposit	340.40	...	+0.40	...
Mixed	880.90	...	+9.60	...
Indexed Stock	282.40	...	+3.00	...
International	355.30	...	+5.90	...
Equity A	347.20	..	+3.50	...
Fixed Int A	253.30	..	-2.10	...
Property A	224.10	...	-1.10	...
Deposit A	199.20	...	+0.30	...
Mixed A	288.20	...	+3.20	...
Index Stock A	220.20	...	+2.40	...
International A	221.00	...	+3.70	..
Equity P	1356.00	...	+19.30	...
Fixed Int P	798.40	...	+8.00	...
Property P	393.00	...	-2.60	...
Deposit P	411.80	...	+0.60	...
Mixed P	859.40	...	+11.10	...
Index Stock P	327.00	...	+4.20	...
International P	438.10	...	+7.00	...
LONDON & MANCHESTER ASSCE Winslade Park, Exeter EX5 1DS. 01392 282456				
Inv Trust Cap	715.30	...	+1.10	...
-do- Acc	1389.10	...	+3.30	...
Property Cap	140.60	...	-0.90	...
-do- Acc	260.00	...	-1.40	...
Fxd Interest Cap	219.90	...	+1.10	...
-do- Acc	410.10	...	+2.30	...
Equity Cap	478.40	...	+7.80	...
-do- Acc	910.50	...	+15.60	...
Internatl Cap	271.00	...	+3.30	...
-do- Acc	509.10	...	+6.50	...
Gtd Deposit Cap	159.20	...	...	...
-do- Acc	294.90	...	+0.30	7.20
Flexible Cap	452.40	...	+5.60	...
-do- Acc	857.00	...	+11.50	...
Moneymaker Fd	641.20	...	+7.90	...
Capital Growth	3944.00	...	+48.60	...
M & G Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1FB 01245 266266				
Amer Bond Acc	747.50	785.00	+17.70	...
Amer Rec Bond	855.00	897.90	+26.70	...
Am Smlr Cos Bd	349.40	366.90	+7.00	...
Australasia Bd	290.20	304.80	-6.90	...
Commodity Bond	334.40	351.20	+5.20	...
Deposit Bond Acc	413.00	433.80	+0.50	...
Equity Bond Acc	2333.10	2449.80	+36.80	...
European Bd Acc	708.50	744.00	+14.80	...
Extra Yld Bd Acc	1297.70	1362.70	+35.10	...
Gilt Bond Acc	578.90	608.00	-3.40	...
Gold Bond Acc	129.00	135.50	+2.40	...
High Yield Bond	510.50	536.10	-0.30	...
Index-Lnk Gt Bd	258.50	271.50	+3.30	...
International Bd	988.00	1037.50	+6.30	...
Japan Bond Acc	147.40	154.80	-11.40	...
Japan Sm Cos Ac	161.50	169.70	-6.60	...
Managed Bonds	1257.30	1320.30	+19.30	...
Prop Bond Acc	633.60	665.40	+7.10	...
Rec Bond Acc	1259.30	1322.30	+16.50	...
S East Asia Bd Acc	247.80	260.30	-10.90	...
MGM ASSURANCE MGM House, Heene Road, Worthing BN11 2DY. 01903 204631				
UK Equity	359.40	378.40	+6.80	...
UK Equity Acc	569.60	599.60	+11.10	...
Special Sits	151.20	159.20	+2.30	...
Special Sits Acc	239.70	252.40	+3.90	...
North American	302.00	317.90	+7.50	...
N American Acc	478.80	504.00	+12.40	...
Pacific Basin	257.90	271.50	-11.60	...
Pacific Basin Acc	408.80	430.40	-18.10	...
Fixed Interest	330.90	348.40	+2.00	...
Fixed Interest Acc	525.10	552.80	+3.60	...
Property	202.30	213.00	+1.50	..
Property Acc	321.10	338.00	+2.60	...
Deposit	157.30	165.60	...	..
Deposit Acc	249.70	262.90	+0.30	..
Managed	362.00	381.10	+4.50	...
Managed Acc	528.60	556.50	+7.10	...
MERCHANT INVESTORS St Bartholomews House, Lewins Mead Bristol BS1 2NH 0117 9266 366				
Property	489.30	515.00	+0.80	...
UK Equity	616.00	648.40	+10.80	..
Gilt Edged	812.00	854.70	+7.20	...
Interest Fund	459.90	484.10	+0.50	...
Managed Fd	697.10	733.70	+6.50	...
Intl Equity	780.80	821.80	+6.70	...
North American	361.90	380.90	+11.70	...
Far East	356.20	374.90	-9.70	...
Intl Currency	283.20	298.10	+2.90	...
NPI 48 Gracechurch Street, London EC3P 3HH 0171 623 4200				
Managed	714.80	752.40	+4.50	...
UK Equity	1095.80	1153.40	+13.40	...
Overseas Equity	590.30	621.30	+2.30	...
Americas	676.00	711.50	+19.60	.
Far East	423.60	445.80	-25.60	...
Property	249.20	262.30	+2.10	..
Fixed Interest	505.10	531.60	+4.20	...
Indexed Gilt	295.10	310.60	+3.50	...
Deposit	249.70	262.80	+0.20	.
NAT WEST LIFE ASSCE LTD PO Box 886, Trinity Quay, Bristol BS99 5LJ 0117 940 4040				
Growth Mgd Pens	201.50	211.90	+1.80	...
NORWICH UNION LIFE INSURANCE SOCIETY - Ex NUAM Funds PO Box 140, Norwich NR3 1PP 01603 622200				
Managed Fund	2265.50	2384.70	+22.90	...
Equity Fund	5491.10	5780.10	+67.80	...
Property Fd	772.70	813.40	+0.70	...
Fixed Int Fd	797.60	839.60	-8.40	...
Deposit Fund	406.20	427.60	+0.50	...
Intl Fund	351.00	369.50	+2.80	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
OLD MUTUAL 2 Bardley Way, Hook, Hants RG27 9XA 01256 768888				
Equity Fund Acc	481.20	507.50	+5.80	...
Fxd Interest Acc	319.00	336.50	+2.80	...
International Acc	343.00	361.90	-4.00	...
Managed Acc	318.80	336.30	+4.50	...
Property Acc	229.80	242.50	+0.60	...
Money Acc	175.40	185.10	+0.10	...
Spec Mkt Acc	264.00	278.50	-5.60	...
Japan Equity Acc	71.90	75.90	-6.20	...
N Amer Acc	294.10	310.30	-8.50	...
Pacific Acc	95.40	100.70	-7.50	...
European Acc	339.40	358.10	-7.20	..
PEARL ASSURANCE The Pearl Centre, Lynch Wood, Peterborough PE2 6FY. 01733 470 470				
Inv Prop Dist	148.10	155.90	+1.20	..
Prop Acc (Gross)	382.70	402.90	+3.10	..
Inv Equity	2179.80	2294.60	+46.20	...
Inv Managed	1352.70	1423.90	+25.90	...
Ret Managed	1588.00	1671.60	+28.10	...
PRUDENTIAL Holborn Bars, London EC1N 2NH 01189 578334				
Managed	524.20	546.10	-2.30	...
PRUDENTIAL INDIVIDUAL LIFE FDS 1 Stephen Street, London W1P 2AP 0171 548 3228				
Managed Fund	1188.60	1251.20	+6.90	...
Equity Fund	2791.40	2938.40	+33.80	...
Intl Fund	840.80	885.10	+0.20	...
Fixed Interest	721.90	759.90	+5.20	...
Property Fund	558.40	587.80	+1.60	...
Cash Fund	417.20	439.20	+0.40	...
Pacific Basin	252.80	266.20	-19.40	...
N American Fd	520.50	547.90	-8.30	...
Euro Fund	536.00	564.30	+12.20	...
Balanced Fund	234.30	246.70	+1.10	...
Strategic Fund	268.10	282.30	+1.10	...
ROYAL HERITAGE LIFE ASSURANCE Peterborough Business Park, Peterborough PE2 6GG. 01733 390000				
Mult Grow (45)	1095.60	...	...	...
-do- Acc	533.20	561.30	...	...
Op Prop	573.00	603.20	+2.80	...
Op Equity	1663.10	1750.60	+26.70	...
Op High Yield	778.80	819.80	+3.10	...
Op Managed	1199.20	1262.30	+15.60	...
Op Deposit	448.60	472.20	+0.40	...
Japan Smlr	113.50	119.50	-1.30	..
Managed Gth	402.10	423.30	+1.40	..
British	597.10	628.50	-7.10	..
Global Bond	119.90	126.20	-1.30	..
Gold Share	60.20	63.40	-2.10	..
Japan	253.90	267.30	+1.40	..
UK Smlr Cos	710.70	748.10	+5.30	..
Mngd Growth	667.20	702.30	-4.00	..
ROYAL LIFE INSURANCE New Hall Place, Liverpool L69 3HS 0151 239 3000				
Royal Life Unit Linked				
Managed Fund	579.80	610.30	+7.80	...
SAVE & PROSPER 16-22 Western Road, Romford, Essex RM1 3LB. 01708 766966				
Bal Inv Fund	109.30	115.70	+1.60	2.09
Deposit Fund (2)	436.40	461.40	+0.60	7.09
Gilt Fund	683.60	722.20	+3.60	7.24
Global Equity Fd	304.80	322.60	-2.80	...
Property Fund (46)	138.90	147.00	+0.40	6.47
SCOTTISH AMICABLE 150 St Vincent Street, Glasgow 0141 248 2323				
Equity	993.40	1045.70	+17.00	...
Fixed Interest	467.50	492.20	+1.30	...
Index-Linked	242.80	255.60	+1.40	...
International	562.20	591.80	-2.10	...
Property	357.30	376.20	...	...
Cash	260.50	274.30	+0.20	...
Managed	668.90	704.20	+4.70	...
Cap Gteed Bd	208.10	219.00	+4.40	...
95% Safeguard	115.20	...	+2.00	...
100% Safeguard	105.30	...	+0.10	...
Wealth Pres Cap	121.10	...	+1.10	...
Wealth Pres Inc	89.90	...	+15.40	...
BonusBond	114.90	...	+2.50	...
SCOTTISH EQUITABLE 28 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YF 0131 556 9101				
Cash	208.37	219.33	+0.20	...
Index-Linked	209.00	220.00	+2.00	...
Fixed Interest	239.10	251.70	+2.30	...
Mixed	394.80	415.70	+7.60	...
UK Equity	403.00	424.20	+8.80	...
International	366.50	385.90	+3.00	...
American	520.00	547.40	+16.60	...
Japan	167.40	176.20	-9.00	...
European	492.90	518.80	+12.70	...
Pacific	278.70	293.30	-13.60	...
Technology	678.70	714.40	+25.80	...
Frgn Bd/Crrcy	246.40	259.30	+1.80	...
SCOTTISH LIFE INVESTMENTS 19 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 1YE 0131 225 2211				
Property	271.30	285.60	+3.60	...
UK Equity	643.20	677.20	+11.40	...
American	449.40	473.20	+11.30	...
Pacific	277.00	291.70	-12.40	...
European	792.40	834.20	+20.20	...
Global Mgd	389.30	409.90	-1.50	...
Fixed Interest	314.60	331.20	+1.10	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Index Linked	253.20	266.60	+4.10	...
Deposit	224.30	236.30	+0.20	...
Managed	430.80	453.60	+5.00	...
Worldwide	144.80	152.60	+2.10	...
Pen Worldwide	157.90	166.30	+2.80	...
SCOTTISH MUTUAL ASSURANCE 109 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5HN 0141 248 6321				
Flex Fund (35)	2582.40	2662.30	...	...
Safety Fund	319.10	335.90	+2.20	...
Growth Fund	357.50	376.40	+4.20	...
Opportunity Fd	367.50	386.90	+4.90	...
Cash Fund	199.10	209.60	+0.20	...
European Fund	629.30	662.50	+16.90	...
Gilts & Fxd Int	273.70	288.20	+2.70	...
Index-Linked Fd	230.30	242.50	+1.70	...
International Fd	371.50	391.10	+5.20	...
North American	459.40	483.60	+12.40	...
Property Fund	139.20	146.60	-0.10	...
UK Equity	431.90	454.70	-5.00	...
UK Smaller	356.50	375.30	+2.60	...
SCOTTISH PROVIDENT 6 St Andrews Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YA 0131 556 9181				
Mixed	410.90	432.60	+2.30	...
Equity	486.00	511.70	+1.20	...
International	363.40	382.70	+1.80	...
Property	274.40	288.90	+2.70	...
Fixed Interest	329.10	346.50	+3.50	...
Index Linked	232.50	244.80	+2.50	..
Cash	217.40	222.60	+0.20	...
Formerly Prolific				
Bal Gwth Mngd	1216.20	1293.90	+6.20	...
Cash Fund	385.80	406.60	+0.40	...
Property Fund	355.30	374.40	+3.40	...
Equity Fund	1225.10	1303.40	+6.30	...
Fxd Interest Fund	645.30	680.00	+4.50	...
International	513.80	546.60	+2.10	...
High Income	1235.30	1314.20	+4.20	..
Far East	451.20	480.10	-13.80	.
North American	998.10	1061.90	+21.10	...
Special Sits	1104.60	1175.20	-1.10	...
Technology	1222.70	1300.80	+42.10	...
Extra Income Fd	665.30	707.80	+3.50	..
Gilt Fund	563.20	599.20	-0.50	..
European	261.30	278.00	+5.40	..
Adventurous Mg	293.20	309.00	+1.40	...
Secure Mgd	210.60	222.00	+1.40	...
Equity Inc Dist	173.10	182.50	+0.80	4.18
Managed Dist	143.30	151.10	+1.00	4.63
Henderson Investment Bonds				
UK Equity Fd	515.10	548.00	+4.80	...
North America	610.20	649.20	+9.90	...
Far East Fund	441.80	470.00	-19.00	...
Global Managed	666.30	708.90	+5.80	...
Deposit Fund	260.30	274.00	+0.40	...
Prime Residential	149.50	157.40	...	...
European Fund	474.70	505.00	+7.00	..
Fixed Interest	64.30	68.40	+0.60	..
SCOTTISH WIDOWS PO Box 902, Edinburgh EH16 5BU 0131 655 6000				
Inv Pol 1	1593.90	1593.90	+18.70	3.36
Inv Pol 2	1436.40	1512.10	-17.40	..
Inv Pol 3	1349.90	1421.10	-15.80	..
Inv Cash	362.40	381.50	+0.10	..
Mixed Fund	673.60	709.20	+5.50	..
Equity Fund	914.70	963.00	+14.70	..
Property Fund	316.20	333.00	+0.30	..
International Fd	616.20	648.70	-4.60	..
Fixed Interest Fd	495.80	522.00	+1.90	..
Indexed Stock Fd	251.40	264.70	+1.70	..
Cash Fund	263.50	277.50	+0.30	..
SKANDIA LIFE Skandia House, Portland Terrace, Southampton SO9 7BX 01703 334411				
Managed Acc	587.00	617.80	+2.80	...
Equity Acc	815.20	858.10	-10.70	...
International Acc	417.50	439.40	-6.70	...
Property	269.10	283.20	+0.20	...
STANDARD LIFE ASSURANCE CO Standard Life House, 30 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2DH 0131 225 2552				
Cash	308.40	324.70	+0.30	...
Equity	1821.70	1917.60	-21.50	...
European	262.60	276.70	+5.90	...
Far East	138.30	145.60	-6.30	...
Fixed Interest	525.80	553.50	+5.00	...
Index Linked	269.30	283.50	+2.70	...
International	759.60	799.60	+7.00	...
Managed	1073.80	1130.40	+11.60	...
Nth American	257.10	270.70	+6.00	...
Property	440.60	463.80	+1.70	...
Pensions				
Cash	501.70	528.20	+0.70	...
Equity	2927.40	3081.50	+41.20	...
European	366.50	385.80	+9.80	...
Far East	104.40	109.90	-4.40	...
Fixed Interest	777.40	818.40	+8.90	...
Index Linked	392.80	413.50	+5.10	...
International	1149.10	1209.60	+9.40	...
Managed	1650.20	1737.10	+17.60	...
Nth American	368.40	387.80	+10.20	...
Property	672.40	707.80	+1.70	...
Stock Exchange	369.10	388.60	+4.40	...
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Fixed Interest Fd	543.30	571.90	+3.50	...
Index-Linked Fd	416.10	438.00	+4.10	...
Property Fund	595.40	626.70	+2.10	...
International Fd	1028.80	1082.90	+35.80	...
N American Fd	534.90	563.10	+13.20	...
Far East Fund	200.70	211.30	-5.90	...
Deposit Fund	346.80	365.10	+0.20	...
Intnl Bd	£136.70			
Worldwide Bond	169.00	177.90	...	...

	Bid	Offer	Wkly +/-	Yld %
European	335.40	353.10	+5.60	
Phoenix Assurance				
Wealth Assured	1133.30	1193.00	+25.80	...
Ebor Phoenix Eq	685.00	732.60	...	...
Property Growth				
Property Fund	701.20	..	+2.50	...
-do- Acc	646.20	..	-2.30	...
Agricultural Fd	955.30	..	+1.00	...
-do- Acc	907.60	..	+0.90	...
Abbey Nat Fd	515.30	..	+1.30	...
Abbey Nat Acc	538.40	..	+1.30	...
Investment Fd	602.20	..	-13.00	...
Investment (A)	575.00	..	+12.40	...
Equity	2404.00	..	+48.00	...
Equity Acc	2283.70	..	+45.60	...
Money Fund	561.80	..	+0.40	...
-do- Acc	533.00	..	+0.40	...
Actuarial Fd	993.40	...	+22.40	...
Gilt-Edged Fd	512.30	..	+3.20	...
-do- Acc	512.30	..	+3.20	...
Retire Annuity	1514.30	..	+0.40	
Immed Annuity	301.00			
Bldg Soc Life	261.70	...	+0.20	...
SUN LIFE OF CANADA Basingview, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 2DZ Dealing: 01256 841414				
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Managed Acc	1300.10	..	-2.20	...
Equity Account	2116.60		-19.20	..
Mngd Fund Acc	588.00	619.00	-1.10	..
Equity Fund Acc	908.10	955.90	-8.80	..
Prop Fund Acc	333.20	350.70	+0.40	..
Fixed Int Fd Acc	422.30	444.50	+1.30	..
Money Fund Acc	252.80	266.10	+0.20	..
Indx-Lnk Scs Ac	255.70	269.20	+1.20	..
Pers Pens Acc	3022.70	...	-2.50	..
Pens Mngd Acc	1404.60	1478.50	-1.20	..
Pens Guarantee	330.30	347.70	+0.60	..
Pens Equity	610.10	642.30	-1.30	..
Pens Property	385.40	405.70	...	..
Pens Fixed Int	422.70	444.90	+0.20	..
Pens Intl	332.90	350.40	+0.40	..
Pens Money	282.70	297.60	+0.30	..
Pens Indx-Lnkd	256.50	270.00	+0.80	..
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Property Acc	488.40	514.20	-0.50	...
Equity Acc	2515.90	2648.40	+26.50	...
Fixed Int Acc	540.70	569.30	+3.60	...
Cash Acc	357.80	376.70	+0.30	...
Amer Equity Acc	704.30	741.40	+18.10	...
Japan Acc	178.70	188.20	-11.30	...
Pacific Acc	285.20	300.30	-12.30	...
Far Eastern Acc	602.30	633.90	-31.70	...
International Acc	748.50	787.90	-5.20	...
Distribution Fund	377.40	397.30	+1.90	4.88
European	332.50	350.10	-7.30	..
Deftrd Dist	257.10	270.70	+2.60	..
TSB LIFE LTD Charlton Place, Andover, Hants SP10 1RE 01264 345678				
Managed Fund	427.80	450.40	+4.30	...
Property Fund	254.50	268.00	+0.50	...
Fixed Interest Fd	288.50	303.80	+2.50	...
Money Fund	230.80	243.10	+0.30	...
Equity Fund	587.50	618.60	+6.20	...
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Managed Bond	1065.50	1121.50	+3.40	...
Money Fund	365.20	384.40	+0.40	...
Equity Fund	1054.70	1110.20	-1.00	...
Fixed Interest	369.10	388.50	+4.70	...
Property Fund	460.50	484.70	+2.70	...
Gresham Framlington				
American & Gnrl	900.60	948.00	+32.10	..
Income	1217.90	1281.90	-1.30	..
International Gth	855.20	900.20	+12.40	..
Capital Fund	915.50	963.60	-0.90	..
Recovery Fund	625.10	658.00	+4.20	..
Japan & General	172.80	181.80	-5.10	..
Formerly AEtna				
Life Funds				
Squirrel	20.80	21.89	+0.03	..
Bear	30.46	32.06	+0.33	..
Owl	33.97	35.75	...	..
Bull	27.22	28.65	+0.09	..
Stag	26.29	27.67	+0.17	..
Gilt Edged	24.33	25.61	+0.30	..
Deposit	17.90	18.84	+0.02	..
Pensions				
Squirrel	29.54	31.09	+0.04	..
Bear	46.30	48.73	+0.57	..
Owl	50.96	53.64	-0.02	..
Bull	38.41	40.43	-0.18	..
Stag	36.87	38.81	-0.43	..
Gilt Edged	33.09	34.83	+0.52	..
Deposit	24.20	25.47	+0.04	..
Pre 1982 Series				
3-Way Fund		903.84	+2.88	..
1982 Series				
UK Equity	585.67	616.49	-0.59	..
N Amer Equity	481.24	506.56	+17.11	..
Far East Equity	299.93	315.71	-11.55	..
Fixed	389.81	410.32	+4.89	..
Cash Deposit	235.75	248.15	+0.26	..
Property	196.21	206.53	+1.15	..
Special Opp	510.52	537.38	+3.37	..
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Index-Linked Fd	236.53	248.97	+3.16	..
Formerly Crown				
Life Mangd Acc	885.20	931.70	+2.80	..
Life Fxd Int Acc	487.60	513.20	+6.10	..
Life Equity Acc	1391.70	1464.90	-1.40	..
Life Money Acc	343.20	361.20	+0.40	..
Life Inv Tst Acc	1164.80	1226.10	+3.80	..
Life Intl Acc	604.40	636.20	-8.90	..
Life High Inc Acc	1400.00	1473.60	+12.80	..
Life Property Acc	308.60	324.80	+1.80	..

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Glorious victory for Carol in loan fight

The high street lenders next target for campaign, says Gavin Lumsden

Carol Riley, the indefatigable organiser of the CMC Victims Association, and a real-life *Coronation Street* Deirdre Rashid, could be forgiven for putting her feet up this weekend. A year after she launched her fight against the oppressive practices of City Mortgage Corporation (CMC), she was thrilled to hear that she had almost won her David and Goliath struggle against the Watford lender.

Cityscape Financial Corporation, the US company that owns CMC, said this week it was selling to keep its own business afloat.

Cityscape's financial woes are directly linked to the dogged resistance which Carol and the 450-strong association displayed in their fight against CMC's exorbitantly-high interest rates and punitive redemption penalties.

Their campaign highlighted the plight of CMC's 38,000 borrowers, many of whom had homes repossessed after being persuaded to take out expensive loans by brokers who had thousands of pounds commission from CMC.

The scandal pushed the Office of Fair Trading into action last year. It issued tough new guidelines for all lenders, and in February again ordered CMC to curb its rates and penalties. As the CMC gravy train shuddered to a halt, Cityscape's US share price collapsed. David Steene, CMC's managing director, who donated £20,000 to William Hague's leadership election campaign, was forced to resign after collecting £7 million in three years.

The battle may be won for Carol, but the war is far from over. CMC borrowers still have their loans to repay. All £550 million of these are set to become the property of Ocwen Financial Corporation, a $3.1 billion (£1.9 billion) mortgage servicer in Florida, which has agreed to buy CMC's assets from Cityscape.

Ocwen is now the biggest player in the growing UK market for lending to people who cannot obtain mortgages from high street lenders because they are self-employed or have a poor credit history. In a disturbing development it has asked the OFT whether it can raise interest rates on CMC loans by 0.5 per cent just a month after the watchdog insisted that borrowers would not have to pay more than 9.9 per cent on the lender's "concessionary" rate and 12.4 per cent on its "standard". Although hailed as a victory this had ignored the fact that many CMC loans are on a flat rate of interest. This means homeowners pay interest on the full amount of their borrowings throughout the term of the loan, no matter how much capital they have repaid. It doubles the cost of the standard rate to 25 per cent APR (annual percentage rate).

In the US, Ocwen specialises in collecting money from borrowers other lenders have given up on. However, a spokesman reassured borrowers it would comply with all the OFT guidelines. For the time being Ms Riley has bigger fish to fry because she is relaunching the action group and calling it the National Association of Mortgage Victims (NAMV) in an attempt to clean up the entire lending industry.

"Ever since we started fighting CMC we have been contacted by borrowers with many other lenders, including some which we would have considered reputable high street banks and building societies."

The aim of the NAMV is to obtain a declaration in the High Court that the use of dual rates of interest and rule 78 — the complex formula responsible for CMC's exorbitant redemption penalties — are illegal under the 1994 Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Act.

The OFT believes loans which use dual rates and rule 78 can be challenged as extortionate. However, this has not been tested before the High Court. So the NAMV wants to mount a class action to establish a new legal precedent. Carol wants to hear from anyone who has had a home repossessed since 1995 on loans using dual rates or rule 78. She is also seeking sponsors for the group as it takes on its new challege."Our ultimate aim is to get a change in the law to stop desperate people being trapped in mortgages from hell," she says.

Carol knows a thing or two about desperation having served a 39-month jail sentence in the early 1990s for a £142,000 theft and fraud conviction after naively involving acharity she was running in a dubious fund-raising exercise. It is an experience that gives her an insight into the trauma being suffered by *Coronation Street*'s Deirdre Rashid.

After her release from prison and bankruptcy Carol took out a CMC loan to reorganise her finances. "I was never responsible for the fraud although I was sent to jail. CMC knew all about me when I took out the loan. They thought they could walk all over people like me. We proved them wrong."

☐ *The National Association of Mortgage Victims (Stoke-on-Trent) is on 01899-507 394.*

DAVID BURNER



Her battle may be won, but Carol Riley's war goes on

WEEKEND MONEY LETTER

Building societies' cynicism

From Mr Jonathan Lever

Sir, How is it that the directors of mutual building societies can deplore small investors for opening savings accounts in the hope of picking up a modest windfall at a later date?

The very same societies later in the throes of takeover or conversion are quick to abandon their moral stance when they make huge sums of money by offering interest rates to their small investors, which in some cases are appallingly low.

This practice is undertaken in a most cynical manner with the knowledge that savers are unlikely to shift money elsewhere for fear of losing their windfall entitlements.

Spare some pity for the beleaguered directors of such societies. They only have fat payoffs or better paid jobs to look forward to.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN LEVER,
Research student,
Needham Hall
of Residence,
205 Palatine Road,
West Didsbury,
Manchester,
M20 2TU.



6€D



■ Letters from readers to Weekend Money are welcomed but *The Times* regrets it cannot give individual replies to letters or financial advice. Letters to Weekend Money can also be sent by fax to *The Times* on 0171-782 5082.

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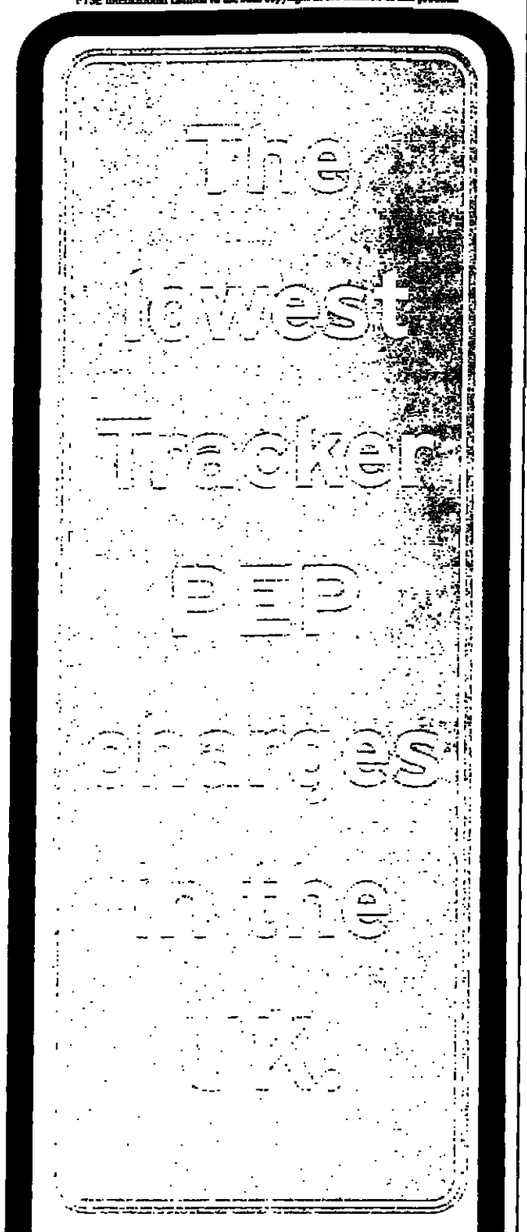
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Conal Gregory marches in with an alternative investment strategy

Small wars lead to big prices for the old model armies

Malcolm Forbes, the millionaire publisher, delighted in corporate warfare, trying out his strategies at home with his battalion of toy soldiers.

When the collection from his military museum in Tangier was sold by Christie's in New York and London last December, the sales raised £509,368, with the top lot, a Battle of Waterloo set, raising £4,830.

But you do not need to be a millionaire to have your own private army. You can start collecting toy soldiers with an investment of £100.

While warfare may be as old as history, most enthusiasts concentrate on examples from the 19th and 20th centuries. Collectors are not nationalistic when accumulating their model armies: French toy soldiers are most popular with Italian and Spanish collectors, while UK-made pieces are purchased by British, German and American enthusiasts.

A major Spanish collection, comprising more than 15,000 pieces, is certain to create interest when it comes under the hammer at Phillips in late June.

The oldest commercially made soldiers date from the early 18th century. Called "flats", these 18th-century pieces are literally flat tin pieces which depict military personnel. Sets made by the tinsmiths of Nuremberg are particularly sought-after. Ten Roman Army flats by Ernest Du Bois of Hanover, circa 1860, made £500 plus 15 per cent buyer's premium at Christie's South Kensington last year.

But by far the greatest interest among the army of toy soldier collectors lies in the hollow cast soldiers produced by William Britain & Sons from 1893. Prices peaked in 1986, but are now regaining momentum.

James Opie, consultant at Phillips auctioneers and author of the definitive *The Great Book of Britain's* (New Cavendish), tips the British regiment models made by Britain's during the three-year period up to 1939. Five years ago, a set of either the Leicestershire or Duke of Wellington's Regiments with their original boxes realised £800-£900 but in January sold for £1,207 and £1,265 respectively at Phillips.

Horse-drawn gun teams are especially popular. Last week Bonhams sold a rare Britain's set 211 heavy Howitzer of 1920-41 with ten Royal Field Artillery soldiers, together with a Coronation coach and outriders, for £500. It had a stained and damaged box, but in top condition would have fetched more than £900, Bonhams said.

Military bands are also highly collectable. At auction expect to pay £350-£400 for Britain's Band of the Life Guards, which includes a director of music, drum horse and instrumentalists in state dress.

Foreign regiments made by Britain have international appeal. The US military band of 1946-55 sells for £320 (up from £200 five years ago), but double in its original box.

The Serbian infantry set of circa 1920, depicting eight charging soldiers with rifles, has increased from £100-£150 in 1993 to over £250 today.

Prices rise dramatically for Britain's production runs that only lasted a short time. Last week a plug-headed set of charging Black Watch Highlanders with one officer shown with binoculars, dating from about 1900, complete with Gordon Piper, made £480 against Christie's estimate of £250-£350, even without its box. Yet larger production runs failed to sell: the 13th Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers, galloping with trumpeter, and prewar Gordon Highlanders at estimates of £180-£220 and £200-£250 respectively.

Repainting can dramatically alter the value. Dealers use the term "minor retouching" to indicate that less than 25 per cent of the figure has been overpainted. When additional features have been painted on to an original uniform, the term "embellishment" is applied.

As in every field of collecting, forgeries are increasingly common. One of the most dramatic is the addition of steel helmets to "create" a 1940-41 set made by Britain. An authentic set has made £4,000, which has encouraged forgers to add helmets to an earlier version. Do take expert advice before buying.

CHRISTIE'S



This tableau by T.M Connolley using Stadden figures of the Isandhlwana battle in the Zulu Wars fetched £1,955 at Christie's

POINTS AND CONTACTS

To achieve a top price, or a good investment if buying, always look for:

- Models that are in mint condition.
- No key personnel (such as an officer).
- Highly detailed painting.
- No sign of lead rot (decomposition of the metal surface).
- Original box included.

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What is the truth behind Manek?

Caroline Merrell examines the double Fantasy Fund winner who decided to set up his own unit trust company

Jayesh Manek appeared to be something of a marketing man's dream. An entrepreneur businessman with a Midas touch when it came to choosing stock.

As winner of *The Sunday Times* Fantasy Fund Management competition for two years in succession, Mr Manek managed comfortably to beat professional fund managers. In 1994, the first year the competition was launched, Mr Manek turned a notional £10 million into more than £500 million, while in the second year Mr Manek turned £10 million in to £58 million. On both occasions he won *The Sunday Times* jackpot prize of £100,000.

Mr Manek's success captured the imagination of Sir John Templeton, the multimillionaire Bermuda businessman, who founded Templeton Investment Management. He was so impressed by the results of the competition that he gave Mr Manek a total of £10 million to invest — and he has turned it to around £15 million.

On the back of his success in the competition, after sitting the requisite exams, Mr Manek decided to launch his own UK-based unit trust company, with a fund geared towards growth rather than income. The fund has attracted nearly £100 million since its launch at the end of last year. Around 18,000 people have investments in the fund.

The advertising campaign used to bring in the money played heavily on Mr Manek's wins in the competition. However, in recent weeks the basis of the competition and the advertisements have come under attack in the press, and it has become clear that in the contest's first year it was possible to select stock after prices had moved.

Weekly entries to the competition had to be returned by the Wednesday, although the calculations were made on movements in the stock prices during the week. All competitors could take advantage of this loophole, and according to *The Sunday Times* many did, including Mr Manek. Around 19,000 people entered a total of 40,000 funds.

In the following year the rules were tightened up to prevent the competitors from using real stock movements when selecting their shares.

Brendan Keane, promotions executive at *The Sunday Times*, said: "There were a few hardcore serious players who used the rules in this way." Many of these, like Mr Manek, made multiple entries in both contests. Mr Manek won in the second year where 12,000 people entered a total of 18,000 funds.

Contrary to press reports, the advertisements featuring the information about Mr Manek's wins in the competition have been cleared by the Personal Investment Authority — the advertisements are not being investigated.

Here *The Times* answers some basic questions about Mr Manek and his company.

Q What is Mr Manek's background?

A Mr Manek is a Ugandan Asian who arrived in Britain in 1971. He trained as a pharmacist at Brighton Polytechnic then, with his family, he set up a chain of chemists and this was eventually sold to Boots.

His interest in the stock market came initially from buying up privatisation shares, until he won the competition. He decided to set up Manek Investment Management (MIM) with his brother Hasu, offering a fund that invested in UK companies.

The company was not Manek's first foray into investment management. He is an adviser on a close-ended Mauritius-based fund investing in Indian stock. The fund is offered through a link with ASK Raymond James, a joint venture company. The fund has fallen 6 per cent since launch, but a comparative index of Indian shares is down 30 per cent. Mr Manek points out that the fund is an emerging market offering, which means that anyone invested should take a long-term view.

Mr Manek had a six-month contract which ended last year with Merrill Lynch, the securities house — neither party will comment on his role.

ANDRE CAMARA



Jayesh Manek won *The Sunday Times* competition twice

Q How does MIM compare with other fund managers in the market?

A The majority of other fund managers working in the industry will not have any business experience themselves. Many, but not all, will have a degree in business or economics and will have started their career as part of a team running a fund in an established investment house. The top managers tend to have at least four years' experience.

Peter Jeffries of Fund Research, an investment analysis company, said: "The highest rated fund managers are those that have managed to produce results in a bear market. They are also managers that stick to their strategy even if things go against them."

Q Who else is involved with Jayesh Manek?

A Hasu, Jayesh's brother, is also an executive director of the company. Stanislas Yassukovich, former head of Merrill Lynch Europe and former deputy chairman of the Stock Exchange, is non-executive chairman, while Crispin Money-Coutts, of Coutts Bank, is a non-executive director.

Mr Yassukovich said: "My role as non-executive chairman is to help them with compliance. I also have to ensure that there is not too much deviation from the rules of the fund."

Mr Yassukovich said that he felt it was important that there were new entrants into the fund management industry. Over the last few years many managers have underperformed the market, which has led to the big increase in index tracking funds. He said he was impressed by Mr Manek's simple approach to picking shares.

Sir John Templeton's endorsement is also important in the marketing of the fund. Sir John's wealth is estimated to be more than £300 million. He said: "I gave him a bit of my money after seeing the results of the *Sunday Times* competition. Sure, it has gone up, but other investments have gone up more."

Q What is MIM's investment philosophy?

A Mr Manek adopts a broadly bottom-up approach to picking stock. However, he will not pick shares when they appear to be at the lowest point. Instead, he will wait until they have gained a little momentum upwards.

The fund is focused on around 50 or 60 stocks, rather than the more usual 150 shares. Cashflow, competitive edge, and P/E ratios will all be considered when choosing the stock. His biggest holdings are Capital Radio, Zeneca, Anite (formerly Cray Electronics) and JJB. Many fund managers base their stock picking on this approach.

Q What safety nets are in place if something goes wrong?

A MIM is regulated, which means that investors benefit from the Investors Compensation Scheme (ICS) if the company becomes bankrupt. The ICS will pay out a total of £50,000 per claim under the scheme. However, MIM does not benefit from a financially strong parent company like, for example, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

Its parent company Deutsche Bank was able to pay out millions in compensation to investors in three European funds managed by Peter Young. Mr Young is currently being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office.

If something happens to Mr Manek, then Colonial will take over the investments.

Q What has the performance been like so far?

A According to the latest performance statistics, Manek's fund has risen by 14 per cent and is twelfth in its sector of 163 funds. An average fund in the sector would have risen by 9 per cent. However, performance cannot be judged over just four months, especially when the markets are soaring. Mr Jeffries said: "You really have to look over the longer term."

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John O'Leary is Education Editor of The Times.



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TOKYO BLUES 50

Graham Searjeant on the slump that just won't go away

WEEKEND MONEY

GOING BETTER 59

The US has its decade in the sun



Well worth the long wait, says Lisa

RICHARD LEA-HAIRINTI



It took Lisa Santi, 29, nearly two years to find a house but when she finally set eyes on her modern two-bedroom house, the Coventry infant school teacher knew she was ready to enter the housebuying chain. The first-time buyer had been saving long and hard and was able to put down a 5 per cent deposit on the £30,000 property.

But buying a house for the first time was not without its traumas. It took her months to complete the transaction as there were several delays with the paperwork. Ms Santi said: "I found the house in August, sorted out the mortgage in September and exchanged in November. The house had been repossessed. It was empty and I was expecting to move a bit quicker."

Lisa has spent £10,000 redecorating, but the waiting has paid off. Since she bought the house, property prices have gone up in the area and she is confident she has made a good investment.

"It will be a struggle to start with but as my salary is going up it will eventually get better. I feel much better with a mortgage than I did paying rent. I know that when I sell the place I would have made money on it."

Lisa chose an endowment mortgage with the Bank of Scotland after consulting her independent financial adviser at MacDonald Taplin.

SUSAN EMMETT

Sudden surge in house prices

A sudden surge in the housing market is a rite of spring. No sooner had the clocks gone forward this week than lenders rushed out new loan ranges, accompanied by a crop of statistics showing that property prices are once more on the move after a winter lull. There are now reports of 115 per cent loans and of properties where 19 interested parties come to view on a single Saturday.

However, not all home owners are seeing their properties appreciate, with houses in some regions increasing by the rate of inflation only. There is also some controversy over sections of the code that covers the sale of mortgages.

Under the code, lenders must offer either information on their loan ranges or advice, accompanied by a written recommendation. While most big lenders will provide the latter, Lloyds TSB, one of the largest lenders, will continue with its current practice of offering information only, save in 12 of its Cheltenham & Gloucester branches where advice will be offered. Lloyds-TSB says that its customers know what type of loan they are looking for. Its competitors believe that prospective borrowers need guidance.

On Monday the Nationwide reported that house prices have risen by 12.3 per cent over the past year and now stand above their previous peak of the third quarter of 1989. On Wednesday the Halifax's house price index showed prices rising by 0.6 per cent in March, close to the 0.8 per cent increase recorded by the Nationwide.

Neither lender expects that the stamp duty increases implemented in the Budget will deter the upward surge in prices. To the chagrin of those aspiring to relocate in more salubrious accommodation, the Chancellor doubled the rate of stamp duty to 2 per cent on properties of £250,000 plus. The rate on homes of £500,000 or more is now 3 per cent.

While the Nationwide and the Halifax report that we are experiencing a pickup in the market, their statistics differ in certain aspects. The Halifax's year-on-year increase is just 5 per cent, against the Nationwide's 12.3 per cent.

Both agree that the evidence of an upsurge in the market in London and the South East is incontrovertible. But the Halifax's findings suggest that the rate of growth is more subdued in the North. In East Anglia, though prices may be rising, they are yet to recover from the 30 per cent decline experienced in the slump.

ANNE ASHWORTH

INSIDE



55 Anne Ashworth on why borrowers need advice



48 The cars for the new tax regime

INVESTMENT



58-59 Are you too late for the Wall Street party?

COLLECTING



62 Marshalling a new model army

BUSINESS NEWS PAGES 26-31

WEEKEND MONEY is edited by Anne Ashworth

Honeymoon is over for first-timers

First-time buyers looking for a cheap loan can no longer expect special treatment from lenders. In a reversal of previous practice, some lenders, including the Halifax, appear to be actively discriminating against first-time buyers.

The bank's 1 per cent discount for three years carries a cashback of £400 for home movers, but only £300 for first-time buyers. The Halifax says the payment is really a contribution to legal fees which are lower for first-time buyers who have no home to sell.

John Carrier, chief executive of the Scarborough Building Society, admits: "Our most competitive rates are not available to first-time buyers. They are a more risky proposition because they have no track record."

Independent mortgage advisers said this week that first-time buyers could end up with unsuitable loans because the terms and conditions have become so complicated. New buyers could also be attracted to the few first-time buyer deals still on the market, which do not necessarily offer the best value.

Ray Boulger, of John Charcol, singles out Alliance & Leicester's first-time buyers' loan for criticism. The two-year fixed rate of 5.69 per cent is reasonable but there are penalties for leaving in the first five years.

If you are buying for the first time, these are the issues you should consider:

■ **Fixed rate or discount?** Fixed rates will buy you certainty for the first years of your loan whatever happens to interest rates. You should be able to fix your rate for two, three or five years at a level well below the current variable rate.

London & Country Mortgages says the lowest two-year fixed rate is 4.99 per cent from Northern Rock, while the lowest three-year rate is 6.35 per cent from Leeds & Holbeck. The Scarborough has a rate of 6.14 per cent fixed for five years.

The potential downside is that you could get trapped paying a high rate if base rates fall over the next few years. The counter-argument is that fixed rates as low as this are a good deal anyway.

■ **Penalties.** All the above lowest rates are low partly because you are locked in to your lender for up to four years after your fixed rate or discounted term ends, going back on the lender's current variable rate. The lower your fixed rate or discount, the longer your tie-in. With the Northern Rock you have to pay 5 per cent of the amount repaid if you leave less than four years after the end of the term. There are deals with no penalties, including the Portman's two-year fixed rate of 6.49 per cent and Nationwide's 1.2 per cent discount for two years.

■ **Compulsory insurance.** Avoid this if possible because you will almost certainly get it cheaper elsewhere. But if you want to borrow a large proportion of your property's value and you have to take out the insurance to get a cheaper rate, it could be worth doing.

■ **Mortgage indemnity guarantee (MIG).** Some lenders make you pay an extra premium if you want to borrow more than 75 per cent of the property's value, which most first-timers do. Others, including the Halifax, Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester, have abandoned this practice on loans of up to 90 per cent of the property's value.

On a £50,000 loan, the MIG premium costs £600, so it is worth avoiding. As soon as you have to borrow more than 90 per cent you will have to pay the whole premium.

SARA MCCONNELL

Limits are eased as loans rise

Homebuyers are taking on larger mortgages to cope with spiralling house prices, and lenders are easing borrowing limits as the housing market shows signs of returning to 1980s-style boom times.

The big lenders this week unveiled new products to tempt borrowers at what is the peak time of the year for housebuying. Abbey National is predicting a bumper spring mortgage market, and says loan approvals are already up 20 per cent on a year ago. This week it launched a range of variable-rate cashbacks and combination fixed rates. Halifax is fighting for market share with the launch of 34 new mortgage products and rates. Other lenders, such as Cheltenham & Gloucester, Northern Rock and Birmingham Midshires, unveiled new rates this week.

Woolwich has sent mortgage brokers details of how it will offer mortgages up to four times a borrower's income, and other lenders are believed to be regularly exceeding quoted maximum multiples of 3.25 times income. Patrick Bunton, of London & Country Mortgages, a Bath mortgage broker, said: "Our average case size is now nudging £100,000 from £85,000 only a year ago. Most first-time buyers seek loans of 3.25 to 3.5 times their income and lenders are looking to be more flexible."

Simon Tyler, managing director of Chase de Vere Mortgage Management, said: "We've seen nine years of price recovery squeezed into just 18 months. The number of transactions we are doing is also up sharply, rising by 25 per cent over the last year."

Doug Conquer of Clark Conway, a London mortgage broker, said: "Prices in this area are still going up and up, and lenders are starting to throw money at borrowers as they have become more confident about the strength of the price recovery." He says he arranged a £120,000 mortgage last week on a Wimbledon flat where Bank of Scotland offered a 115 per cent loan, in other words for 15 per cent more than the value of the home. He said: "The buyer, a young professional woman, is confident that the property will soon reach the value of the loan."



Young homebuyers are having to take on much larger loans to secure a home

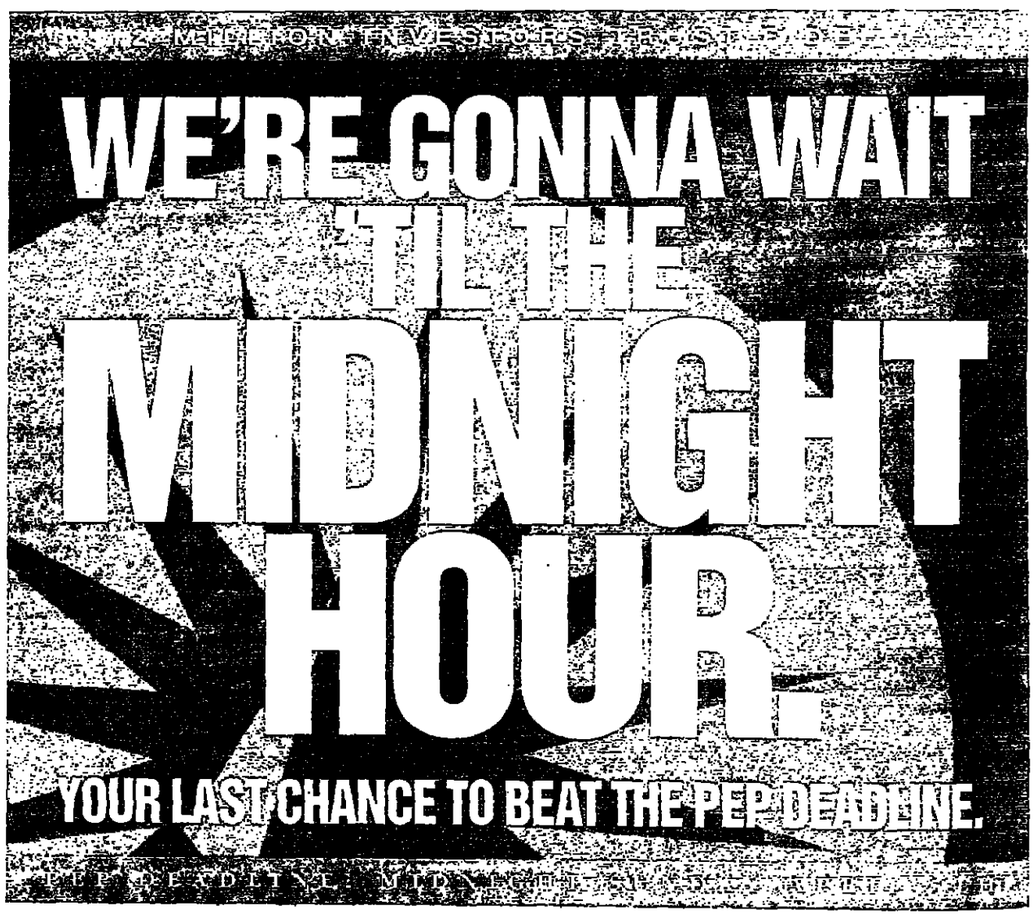
Many lenders got stung with huge arrears problems after the last house price bubble burst, and were unable to claim from their own insurance policies where they had exceeded agreed lending limits. Mr Bunton added: "It was lend, lend, lend in the late 1980s and there were loads of cases where multiples were exceeded. It got much tighter in the early 1990s, but lenders have now got rid of their bad debt problems and are looking to lend again."

But the picture is of a very uneven house market recovery across the country. Halifax says it is standing firm on high loan to value mortgages, refusing to offer 100 per cent loans. It also says that borrowers hoping to take on loans above 3.25 times their income will be disappointed.

Borrowers are also being more discerning about the loans they will take on. After strong consumer pressure, many lenders have dropped costly mortgage indemnity premiums on loans below 95 per cent loan to value, and borrowers are seeking fixed rate mortgages without penalty periods.

Mortgage packaging company Private Label is offering a 6.99 per cent four-year fix with no penalty period whatsoever, and John Charcol has a two-year fix at 6.39 per cent, again without any penalties. Clark Conway's Doug Conquer said: "Clients are sensitive to being tied in, so reduced or zero penalty periods are very attractive."

PATRICK COLLINSON



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INTERVIEW



Orphans who broke a catwalk queen's heart

PAGE 5

FOR SALE



The house where Vivien was happy as Larry

PAGE 10

TRAVEL



C'est cool: Paris warms up for le World Cup

PAGE 27

COMPETITION



Win Lara Croft — and £5,000 of gaming software

PAGE 39

THE TIMES
WEEKEND

SATURDAY APRIL 4 1998

'I think I'd rather have malaria'

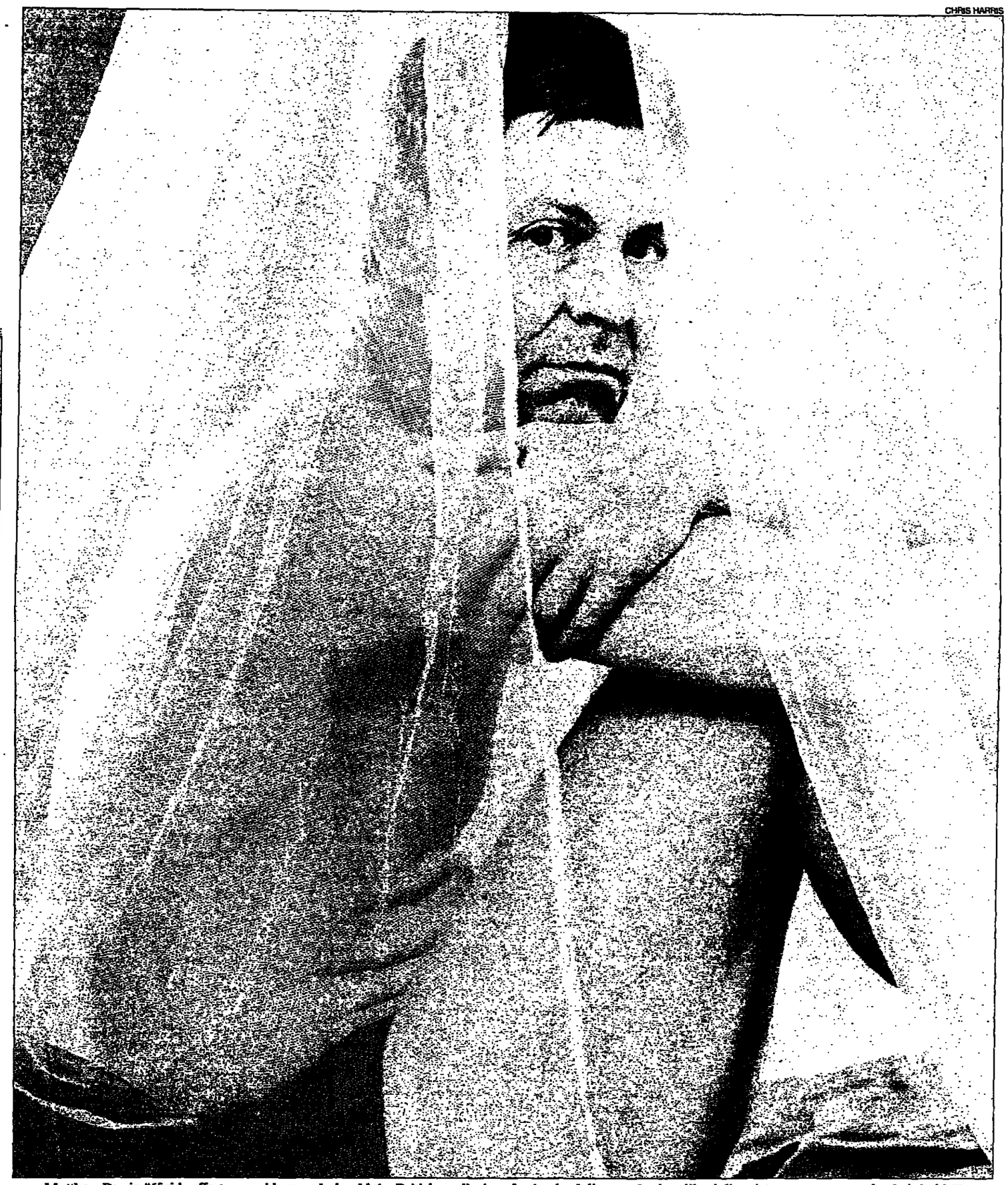
TONY STONE



A mosquito piercing human skin. But malaria risks vary widely

Matthew Parris suffered dreadful side-effects from an anti-malaria drug, and asks why doctors still prescribe it

CHRIS HARRIS



Matthew Parris: "If side-effects are widespread, should the British medical profession be doling out Lariam like dolly mixtures, as seems to be their habit?"

Leaving our pavement restaurant table in the ancient port of Massawa, I knew something was wrong. My knees went weak. Total exhaustion swept over me in a matter of moments. It was so unexpected. Ten minutes earlier we had been mopping up our plates, finishing our Eritrean beer and betting on the progress up a peeling wall of geckos in a vertical race for the insects around a single bare lightbulb swinging in the warm Red Sea wind. Mosquitoes teased — but why should I worry? I was on a course of Lariam, prescribed in Britain and purchased in London at the BA travel clinic in Regent Street.

One pill a week — it was as simple as that. My companions and I had been advised that Lariam was now the only thing to take in North Africa because strains of malaria prevalent there had become resistant to the weekly Chloroquin and daily Paludrin that used to be part of the routine of the tropical traveller's life.

Odd, though, that nobody working in Eritrea seemed to know about this. Locals and aid workers relied on the older prophylactics. Few in Eritrea had been persuaded (or even heard) that these were unreliable. I heard of no cases in which they had failed. Still, we for our part knew we were safe. I had no worries, having taken Lariam once before without ill effect — though I had abandoned the course early on discovering there was no malaria in a region where British advice had been adamant that we must expect it. So what was wrong with me now? The walk back to our rickety hotel was only about 800 yards, but I realised I was not going to make it. Baffled by the suddenness and intensity of what had hit me, I did not want to scare the others. "I'll just stand here for a bit — you go on. I'm fine," I said to the others. I hate people

Continued on page 2

SHOPPING ..... 4,5 | FOOD & DRINK ..... 6,7 | PROPERTY ..... 9-12 | GARDENING ..... 13,14 | COUNTRY LIFE ..... 17 | GO ..... 23 | TRAVEL ..... 27-35 | GAMES 39,40



'After I had taken the Lariam my dreams became hallucinations rather like an LSD trip, crowded with dreadful images'



Matthew Parris, right, in Eritrea. He stopped taking Lariam after he collapsed but it took months for the side-effects, including hallucinations, to fade completely

Continued from page 1

who make a scene about feeling unwell. One friend stayed behind. He knew me well enough to know that if I was unwilling to walk, something must be seriously wrong.

I am 48. I have felt disinclined to walk often enough. I have *never*, never in my life, however ill, however exhausted, felt unable to walk. I steadied myself against a telephone pole.

And now I realised I was unable to stand. Unless you are like me, blessed with a robust constitution and accustomed to pushing your way through the occasional infirmities that come your way, you will hardly know how shocking it was not to be able to stand up. I collapsed on to my haunches, head down, close to fainting. Julian hovered. But I never want attention when I feel bad. I just want everyone to go away.

It is embarrassing to write this, but at this point I lost control over my stomach muscles. I had not been remotely aware of an upset stomach — not even indigestion. None of the others had either and nor did they later. And within ten minutes my stomach would return to normal. It felt more like an internal muscular failure than anything to do with what I had eaten. I just managed to get my shorts down in time. Julian hovered further off.

And after that I recovered. Enough strength returned to stand up, walk gently back to the hotel, crash out on to my pallet-bed beneath a slowly turning fan and pass out for ten hours. I awoke next morning feeling back to normal.

Well, almost. In fact, there had been a whole clutch of small health worries, none of them serious, none of them enough to spoil an incredible new year holiday in the Horn of Africa; but all of them together adding to a nagging anxiety about that course of Lariam.

As soon as I began the course two weeks before leaving Britain, my night-time dreams turned weird. Strange, grotesque dreams, often with a horrific edge. Monstrous, hideous faces would loom at me, waking me in the night. One night I murdered all my brothers and sisters in my dreams. A few nights later I murdered my parents, too.

Twenty-five years ago at university in America I tried LSD. That was a bad trip, causing mild paranoia, turning the faces of vagrants in the street into parodies of ugliness and arousing a desire to obliterate them — easily suppressed but impossible to ignore. Now, after the Lariam, my dreams were taking a distinct turn the same way, crowded with dreadful images.

Why do I blame the Lariam? I cannot be sure, but it was after the Lariam that problems began and some of my travelling companions reported similar experiences: troubled sleep, violent or bizarre dreams. None, however, experienced any other side-effects.

Like the itching skin. This bothered me. I do not suffer from skin complaints. Over half a century a man gets to know his own body, his strengths and weaknesses. I do sore throats and hacking coughs; I do not do rashes. Yet now, arms and legs and the palms of my hands kept itching. So could that be the drug, I asked myself?

Also, there was an odd taste in my mouth. This is hard to describe — and was the mildest of sensations and not a problem at all — but I think the chemical composition of my saliva must have altered. My mouth just tasted different. Some food seemed to taste strange, too. Tea, in particular (and to a lesser extent coffee), took on a faint but discernibly bitter edge.

That was three months ago and only now is it beginning to fade. It was as though some small but discernible chemical change had occurred to the internal balances within my body. Amputation I can face, but this sort of thing really scares me.

Finally, there were the hallucinations. This I can, with utmost confidence, ascribe to the Lariam for they seemed linked to the dreams. They were unsensational but unmistakable. When I closed my eyes, instead of the vague shapes and colours that often swim before us, I would see faces. They did not appear at once, but began to form from the abstract patterns that float before the brain. It was like that game of finding forms and faces in a swirling cloud — except that the faces were finding me. I could not turn them off — they took shape of their own accord. They were tortured and intricate, like intense, fussy pencil-drawings.

I had not worried unduly about any of these symptoms. We are all troubled from time to time by little problems or odd changes in our mental or physical form, and individually each was minor.

That they might be in some way linked, and linked to the malaria prophylactic I was taking, was a suspicion only half-forming in my mind. It was unproved. It still is. Maybe I was being unfair. Maybe I was getting paranoid — ah, paranoid — maybe that was the Lariam, too?

So after that brief but sensational collapse in Massawa I stopped taking it. I stopped taking anything. The risk of malaria was a risk of an old, familiar ailment and, strange as this may sound, that was a risk I preferred to this frighteningly unfamiliar drug. It was a sign of how panicky one gets.

The symptoms continued. It has taken months for them to fade. On return from Eritrea I was stricken by another malady I have hardly experienced before — a fever in which I would wake in the night, by turns hot and sweating, or shivering. By day I felt better and so carried on working, but once, at a particularly bad moment in the small hours, I took my temperature which was 102. These symptoms are not dissimilar to those of malaria so I decided to give it a week and, if no better, go to the Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London.

I never see the point of GPs in these matters. If the problem is serious they will presumably send you to a specialist. I know when the problem is serious so I would rather go straight to the specialist. Besides, it was British doctors (though not my GP) who put me on to Lariam in the first place. I lack confidence in these people. I don't think they know very much.

Anyway, by the end of the week I was better. Had Lariam been the cause of this ailment, too? By now I really was well able to understand how sufferers from organophosphate poisoning or Gulf War syndrome begin to find — or imagine — a link between every physical ailment.

The next problem, I am convinced, was the Lariam. I had been off it now for about four weeks. My palms and soles began to itch again. During the night this became maddening. One night I switched on the light to inspect my hands and feet, by now afflicted with pins and needles as well as itching. Palms and soles had turned an orange colour. Wrists and ankles were mottled. I had never experienced this before.

The next night it was the same, but slightly less so. By the end of the week this, too, had completely disappeared.

The dreams, meanwhile, were returning to normal. The hallucinations had gone — a pity really — I was beginning to find these interesting. The fever has never returned, nor the faintness or stomach seizure. And the good taste of tea is slowly coming back. I am fine again.

But I will never take Lariam again. I have since read the blurb included with the pills. I had not read this before I experienced the problems above. First there was a list of the categories of patient who should not take Lariam: I fell into none of these, so reading the blurb (which I should have done at the outset) would not have put me off taking the drug.

Let me quote verbatim: "Most common unwanted effects: feeling or being sick, dizziness, vertigo, loss of balance, headache, sleepiness, sleep-problems, diarrhoea, stomach ache. If you feel dizzy, do not drive or carry out tasks requiring a high degree of co-ordination.

"Less common unwanted effects: Effects on nervous system: psychiatric reactions which may be disabling and last for more than several weeks.

"These include unusual changes in mood or behaviour, feelings of worry or anxiety, depression, feelings of persecution, crying, aggression, restlessness, forgetfulness, agitation panic and hallucinations. Other neurological reactions include fits, pins and needles, visual disturbances, ringing in the ears, co-ordination problems and shaking hands.

"Effects on circulation: changes to blood pressure or heart rate, palpitations (awareness of thumping of your heart-beat).

"Effects on skin/scalp: skin rash, itching, hair-loss. In rare cases skin reactions may be serious.

"Other effects: Feeling of weakness, muscle cramps, joint pains, muscle pains, tiredness, fever or chills, loss of appetite, a change in the level of certain factors (eg white blood cells, platelets, enzymes) in your blood."

One should not generalise from one's own particular case; but if my problems are widespread I question whether the British medical profession should be doling out this stuff like dolly mixtures, as seems to be their habit with drugs.

People talk of malaria as the great no-no. I realise it can kill. It does kill, in huge numbers. But I also know that the overwhelming majority of those who get malaria do not die. And, like any experienced tropical traveller, I understand — what British travel clinics seem unwilling to admit — that the risk of getting malaria varies enormously, from very high to almost nil, depending on the place, the length of exposure, the altitude, the time of year, and the number of mosquito bites (specifically anopheles mosquito bites) likely to be sustained during the period of exposure to risk.

The attitude one encounters among British doctors — that if there is any risk of a mosquito bite in an area where malaria has ever been reported, then one should take the whole course of prophylactics — seems to be a kind of irresponsibility masquerading as super-caution. One of the hidden costs of mindlessly prescribing the maximum protection is that the practice breeds scepticism among patients; we start taking everything we are advised to take with a pinch of salt. I am a living example, for I am now emotionally disposed not to believe anything British doctors advise me about malaria.

The profession should think again. For we know that all malaria prophylactics damage health. From what Ecstasy-users tell me, and from the figures we have for Ecstasy damage, I am convinced that Lariam may be more dangerous — but when did the *Daily Mail* ever splash a Lariam scare on its front page?

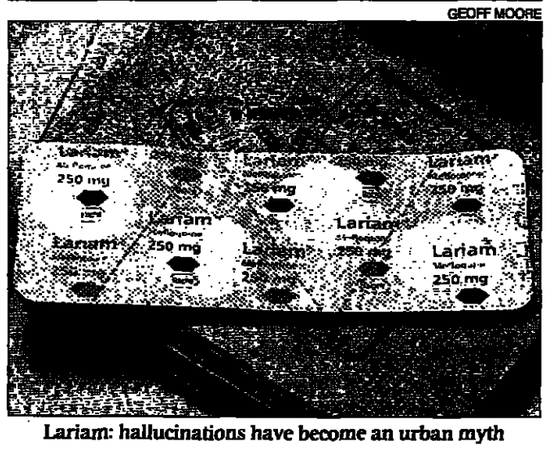
Into the left-hand column of any *Malaria: prophylactic or no?* balance-sheet, therefore, and against the cost of the preventive, we should enter a real if modest figure for physical damage. That being so, it cannot be the case that *any* risk of malaria, however small, entered into the right-hand column. *Costs of rejecting the preventive*, we should enter a real if modest figure for physical damage.

That being so, it cannot be the case that any risk of malaria, however small, entered into the right-hand column, costs of rejecting the preventive, trumps the left-hand column. We are pitting a certainty of modest damage against a possibility of large damage. It is necessary to do the sum. Not all insurance is rational.

I know what Dr Stuttaford will say. He will castigate me for not reacting at once to my early anxieties, and seeking advice. But from whom? The profession that put me on this stuff in the first place? No, I am learning a different approach to prescribed drugs. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, put the idea in my head: just say no.

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD WRITES

GEOFF MOORE



Lariam: hallucinations have become an urban myth

GILBERT PINFOLD hallucinated on a cruise, a sufficiently rare event for a traveller for it to be the pivotal point in Evelyn Waugh's novel, *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*. Now, Lariam mefloquine, an anti-malarial preparation, may give some unsuspecting globetrotters hallucinations in rather less recondite circumstances, but the only record of them will be on a form reporting another side-effect.

The neuro-psychiatric side-effects of Lariam have promoted it to the realms of urban myth. These not only include its ability to cause hallucinations, acute depression and other serious psychiatric symptoms, but also dizziness, sleeplessness and poor muscle co-ordination. A specific syndrome has been identified which includes delirium, rigors and a high temperature.

> 'The good news is that side-effects are rare'

The good news is that these effects are comparatively rare. Several surveys have shown that neuro-psychiatric side-effects are no greater with Lariam than with other anti-malarials. One problem is that much of the work has been done with tough, male soldiers (the side-effects are more common in women). However, when ordinary travellers are studied it seems there is a slightly greater risk of all neuro-psychiatric events in those on Lariam.

The neuro-psychiatric symptoms are dose-related and are ten times more likely to be seen in patients being treated for malaria than they are in travellers taking smaller doses to keep the disease at bay. Travellers who have a history of epilepsy, any adverse reactions to stress, depression or other psychological symptoms should not take Lariam. Also, travellers should take their first dose a fortnight before they leave. This precaution would allow any untoward affects to be detected early.

The other potentially dangerous side-effect is that Lariam can interact with betablockers and possibly other heart drugs. Lariam should not be prescribed with these drugs, and the cardio-toxic effect of some of the older anti-depressants is another reason why depressed patients should use other anti-malarials. Lariam has also caused, extremely rarely, oesophageal ulceration and Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, a severe ulceration of the skin. More frequently Lariam, like other anti-malarials, causes gastro-intestinal ill-effects.

The side-effects of Lariam should not obscure its usefulness. It is effective against strains of malaria that are resistant to Chloroquine and Paludrine Proguanil. It is therefore to be recommended where strains of malaria caused by the parasite Plasmodium falciparum, which is potentially fatal, abound and where resistance levels are high. I have taken Lariam many times and neither lapsed into deep melancholy nor dropped dead from cardiac arrhythmia. I like the simple way it is taken, once a week, and recommend it when there are no contra-indications.

How I survived malaria

Nick Wapshott decided not to take the tablets – but he paid a high price



Nick Wapshott: "At least I managed to kill the mosquito"

At first I thought it was jet lag. Two days back from India and I felt slightly strange, but not alarmingly so. The time difference between Britain and the sub-continent cannot always be easily shrugged off. Then by Wednesday I thought I was catching a cold, which was irritating. Two weeks of warmth in Goa and Maharashtra over Christmas had obviously gone to waste. And by Friday I was convinced I was going down with flu, which was also unfair. I had had a flu jab in the autumn and hoped to make it through the winter unscathed.

At six that night I telephoned my wife to say, yes, I did feel well enough to drive to the country for the weekend, but three hours later, when I got home from work, I was in a bad way. I could barely muster enough patience to describe the sudden sense of wretchedness and debilitation that had overtaken me. And when I sat in the car, waiting to set off, I was overcome by the first fit of uncontrollable shivering.

For the two hours it takes to reach Gloucestershire I sat wrapped in a duvet, with the car heater on so high that my wife was afraid she would fall asleep at the wheel. Yet I still felt icily cold. By concentrating hard I could stop my teeth chattering, but no amount of willpower could prevent the sudden jolts of shaking.

I longed to be tucked up in bed, but dreaded the end of the journey because I faced a 30-second walk from the car to the front door. And when I finally buried myself in a foetal position under the bedclothes with a hot-water bottle for company, I shivered so violently that I was unable to sleep. I have rarely felt so alone, so cut off, so incarcerated in my own body.

The next morning I felt exhausted but better. Although reluctant to leave my bed, I was at least able to take some interest in the world about me. But by afternoon I was huddled once again in an arctic gale. And in the early evening the first fever arrived and stayed until midnight. Violently cold, then unbearably hot, this was plainly not flu. In the early hours of Sunday, I asked my wife whether she knew the symptoms for malaria. Looking up the disease in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, it was like reading a guide to my home town. Yes, here were the rigors, the torrid temperature and the sweating. We telephoned the doctor after midnight and were at first relieved and then alarmed to find that she was to make a house call within half an hour.

Looking back, I can clearly remember the mosquito that bit me and, a small crumb of comfort, that I had killed it. In just two bites on my left arm it had infested my body with the blood-eating parasite. We were staying in what was once a model Mahashtran state-run tented camp beside a gloriously unspoilt beach between Bombay and Goa. But a few years of Indian neglect and maladministration by an arrogant and idle former air force officer and the place was in poor shape.

I was all for moving out, but the town was too remote and primitive to offer an alternative, so we stayed put. Even when inspecting the washrooms, which drained into a fetid pool in the sand, it did not cross my mind that we were all in danger of catching malaria.

I have been travelling to India and other exotic places for more than 20 years and I used to swallow my malaria pills faithfully. Then two things happened. My wife became pregnant and the doctor said she should avoid the pills because they might damage the unborn child. And so we came to think of the pills as poison. Then two summers ago I went to Kenya and, like Matthew Parris, was prescribed Lariam.

While my family swam and had a good time on the beach, I confined myself to my room and went quietly mad. I was so crazy I did not even connect taking Lariam with the paranoia I was suffering. But when, after three days of horror, I stopped taking the pills, my sanity was restored.

I suppose that travelling so often to India, I have become blasé about malaria, as if familiarity with the sub-continent provides immunisation against its diseases. And this time, travelling to Goa and Bombay, which are not considered malarial, I chose not to take anything. So I felt particularly stupid, sitting in the Hospital for Tropical Diseases, behind St Pancras station, when I confessed to the doctor that no, I had taken no precautions.

Over the next four days, while waiting for the drugs to take effect, I came to know the daily routine of the colony of malaria parasites inside me which, promptly at four each afternoon, started multiplying by the million while I trembled and shook. Then, as the freeze turned to thaw, the monstrous bugs would go on a feeding frenzy of my red corpuscles while I boiled alive. The relief of knowing that my illness could be cured was quickly overtaken by the dread of the daily onslaught.

During the rigors, the population explosion of the parasites made my heart and spleen swell. There was no room for food and barely space for the endless water I needed to avoid dehydration.

This resulted in the only good thing I have to say about malaria — you effortlessly lose weight. I lost eight pounds in a week and have since toyed with writing an account of my illness called *The Malaria Diet*. It is cruel and uncomfortable and it works without fail. And when it is all over you are so grateful to be cured that being overweight seems nothing to worry about.

The model mother to Prague's forgotten children

Prosper Keating meets the catwalk queen fighting for Western families to adopt the orphans of the Czech Republic





PATRICK LAURIER

Teresa on the catwalk and with an eight-month-old Gypsy orphan. "We're trying to change the law to make it easier for Westerners to adopt these children"

In a steel-barred cot, flat on her back with arms outspread, lies a baby girl, perhaps a year old. Her head, framed by a halo of fine blonde hair, rolls rhythmically from side to side, her blue eyes fixing on some invisible point in her inner world. In a ward full of infants stricken by all kinds of tragic handicaps from autism to polio of a severity not seen in the West for 40 years, I wonder what could be wrong with this beautiful child.

Teresa Maxova says: "She's two. Her mother was a junkie and this baby was born an addict, but her mother was a ballerina from a good family."

As patron of the Infant Institute and Children's Home on the outskirts of Prague, Teresa makes a point of knowing about every child in the home. She was one of the Czech supermodels who took the fashion world by storm in the early 1990s. But she gave up modelling a couple of years ago to establish the Teresa Maxova Foundation, raising funds for children's homes and institutions throughout the Czech Republic, where she has become a celebrity. Her recent return to modelling was prompted by the need to earn a living, but she had other reasons.

"As soon as I wasn't a model anymore, doors started closing in my face when I tried to promote the foundation. People weren't interested. As soon as I went back to modelling, the doors opened again."

The drug addict's baby lives in a single-storey building in the grounds of the home. This is where most of the chronic and terminal cases among the home's 140 or so orphans and abandoned children live, cared for by devoted nurses earning less per month than the cost of dinner for two in a London restaurant.

She's not the only one there from a privileged background. A cheerful little Down's syndrome girl was dumped by her parents, rich doctors, because she didn't fit in with their chic lifestyle. They offloaded her on to the home for free even though they are millionaires by Czech standards.

In a bed beside her sits a bright little boy with a ready smile. He is perfectly normal and available for adoption, but lives there because his little sister has Down's syndrome and she is paralysed from the waist down. Under Czech adoption law, siblings can't be separated, so this little boy will never live with a normal family unless they're prepared to take his sister as well. As Teresa cuddled the doctors' daughter, she nodded towards a silent little girl in her cot.

She was very pretty, her delicate face spared the usual cruelties of Down's syndrome. Her lip trembled like any child about to cry, so I stroked her hand with my finger and spoke softly to her in a language she couldn't understand. I became aware of the nurses gathering around silently, exchanging looks of amazement. Teresa said: "She's normally terrified of men. She screams and cries if she sees a man." In a ward in the main building lies five-month-old Han Sun. His Chinese parents were working in the Czech Republic when he was born. His mother was forced to leave him there before returning to China because she already had the legal maximum of one child.



A shot from Teresa's modelling portfolio

Were it easier for foreigners to adopt Czech children there would be queues of potential Western parents applying.

There is a room in the home where young mothers wean their babies before abandoning them. Many are teenage prostitutes in transit through Prague on their way to the brothels of western Europe and Czech girls of Slav and Gypsy origin who cannot care for a child for a variety of reasons. They arrive at the home, have their babies, breastfeed them for two weeks and leave.

It is often argued that such people should be prevented from having children but that raises uncomfortable questions. Do you sterilise them, as Sweden and Denmark did until recently, or do you educate them about contraception? The Teresa Maxova Foundation intends to try the latter — as soon as it has the funds.

About 80 per cent of children abandoned in the Czech Republic are of Gypsy origin. Those available for adoption lose out against blonde, blue-eyed babies in a country where 45 per cent of the population admit to viewing expulsion, or worse, as a reasonable solution to "The Gypsy Question" — as even educated Czechs term it, in a throwback to the Nazi era.

Those unavailable for adoption are victims of the Law of Interest, whereby the family can send just one or two postcards a year to satisfy the state of their continued interest in the child's welfare and some possible future intention to take the child back into the family — presumably as soon as it is old enough to earn money by whatever means.

An American-sponsored Prague business magazine recently boasted proudly of Prague's new status as the sex capital of Europe.

The foundation is pushing for reform of the interest and adoption laws. Teresa says: "We're trying to make it easier for non-Czechs to adopt the children. Because of the bureaucracy only Czechs can adopt them, but that means that dark-skinned children don't stand a chance."

As she spoke, the eight-month-old girl in her arms stared gravely into our photographer's lens. Suddenly she smiled. It was as if someone had turned on the sun in that drab ward. "Her mother abandoned her so she's one of the few actually available for adoption. She's gorgeous, healthy and bright in character But here in the Czech Republic, nobody will take her because she's a Gypsy."

Westerners with even a passing knowledge of Gypsy traditions find it hard to believe that such family-oriented people could abandon their children. But after more than 70 years of state persecution, the disintegration of traditional Gypsy family values is hardly surprising.

Persecution of Gypsies has been legitimate in the Czech Republic since an otherwise liberal republican government passed the Law on Wandering Gypsies in 1927. A few months before Hitler's armies occupied Prague in October 1939, the Czech government passed a further law establishing punitive labour camps for "Gypsy families and other wandering individuals". Aided by Czech police, the Nazi administration interned several hundred thousand Gypsies — only a few hundred were still alive in 1945.

The Communists continued the process, forcing the remnants of a once-proud, creative people into an urban lifestyle. This led, predictably, to alienation and social exclusion and, in turn, to unemployment, crime and social problems such as alcoholism and drug dependency. Since the Velvet Revolution of 1989, Gypsies have provided an easy target for impoverished Czechs looking for scapegoats for the decline in their quality of life.

Today's Czech Gypsies are a lost people in a country run by politicians like the Social Welfare Minister who sacked every Gypsy working in unemployment offices.

It is widely rumoured that a recent television programme, *Gypsies go to Heaven*, portraying the idyllic lifestyle of Gypsy emigrants on benefits in Canada, was financed by a cabal of politicians and businessmen as propaganda aimed at encouraging Gypsies to emigrate. The programme, reminiscent of Nazi films in the late 1930s depicting the good life enjoyed by Jews who emigrated to Palestine, sparked a mass exodus of Gypsies to Canada.

When Canada imposed visa requirements on Czechs, the Gypsies targeted Britain in the belief that the authorities were unable to impose similar restrictions on entry. The plan backfired. The Western media turned its gaze on Czech politicians and businessmen who were hoping to channel future EU grant aid into their Swiss bank accounts. Other embarrassments include an unreformed Communist bureaucracy, endemic if not epidemic corruption at all levels, soaring unemployment, uncontrolled organised crime and a high concentration of active neo-Nazis. The streets may be swept regularly and the trains might run on time but sex tourists can have a Czech teenager for a couple of dollars and politicians aren't subject to traffic laws.

'She's a very pretty baby, but no one will adopt a Gypsy'

Like other Czechs, staff at the foundation refer to Czech bureaucracy as "The Wall". Teresa says: "There are too many bureaucrats, too many laws, too many problems. You can't overcome red tape and you just fall into a black hole. It's like something dreamt up by Franz Kafka."

Czech charity laws, aimed at preventing people from using charities for laundering money, make it hard for bona fide Czech charities to function without donations from abroad. Campaigning for the reform of these laws is another of the foundation's aims. Teresa channels more of her own money into the foundation than she is prepared to admit.

Some people in the fashion business sneer at Teresa's efforts and accuse her of operating the foundation as a tax loophole or a bored model's hobby or both. Teresa says: "People say 'She's a model. She just puts money in. She doesn't care about the children. She probably can't have any of her own', that kind of thing."

Despite the numerous obstacles faced by Teresa and her colleagues, they do achieve successes. An auction of painting by some of the older children at a Christmas Ball in Prague Castle raised a staggering £18,700. Teresa also hopes to stage a fund-raising fashion show in Prague, along the lines of the recent Versace show at Nelson Mandela's house for a South African children's charity.

Back at the home, as the little Gypsy girl nobody wants to adopt laughed and played with Teresa's blonde hair, a baby boy slept in the corner, his perfect Nordic looks belying his Russian origins. Adopted within a short time of arriving at the home, he awaits collection by his happy family. He is one of the lucky few.

● *The Teresa Maxova Foundation is a non-profit registered charity. Inquiries to: The Teresa Maxova Foundation, Kovo Building, Jankovcova 2, 17088 Praha 7, Czech Republic. Tel: +420-2-66782998 Fax: +420-2-66782999. E-mail: natema@bohem-net.cz*

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SHOP WATCH

■ **Lalique** is breaking fashion's stranglehold on London's Sloane Street with a flagship store, opening this month. The first floor has the company's trademark crystal, while on the ground floor are scarves, handbags and belts with crystal clasps and buckles. Lalique, 201 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-245 9090).

■ **The Roobarbe & Custard** catalogue by Sarah Kunz has seriously groovy kids clothes, including Union Jack sweaters. "Kids want modern stuff they can run around in," she says, but grown-ups are snaffling the T-shirts too. Call 0171-835 0010 for mail order.

■ **Liberty**'s best-kept secret is its sewing school. Courses are held in the Regent Street shop, *and you can tackle anything* from beginner's millinery to advanced ballgown and wedding dress techniques. Or book for Christmas crafts. Call 0171-734 1234 for details.

■ **The Cube**, Helen Bromovsky's new shop, fuses her personal philosophy of luxury and simplicity. She sells Volga's fabulous imported Russian linen, plus her new Cubic furniture range, including a contemporary linen day bed, armchair and sofa. Find The Cube at 14 Holland Street, Kensington (0171-938 2244).

■ **The Home**, in a converted Bradford wool mill, has one of the largest collections of contemporary furniture in the UK. Look out for big designer names like Arne Jacobsen as well as Alessi accessories and Starck lighting. Open seven days a week, 10am-6pm at *Salt's Mill, Victoria Road*, Saltaire, Bradford (01274 530770).

■ UPDATE: With Easter next week, **The Chocolate Society** (01423 322230) has limited stocks of fabulous Valrhona French chocolate eggs, filled with fruit *ganache* and praline, £10 for 27 ... **Thorntons** has a dark chocolate egg with crystalised ginger (£6.99). Call 0800 454537 for branches nationwide ... or why not organise the children with **Festive Occasions**' egg decorating kits. Call 01442 232334 for stockists.

JUDITH WILSON

Where Fortune smiles on food

The satirist John Fortune loves to truffle in his local delicatessen, says Michael Cable

my favourite shop



CHRISTOPHER BARKER

John Fortune (left) with delicatessen owners Di Bennett and Dan Mortimer. He blames his passion for food on wartime rationing

What appeals most to the veteran satirist John Fortune is the funny side of life. But there is one thing he takes seriously — food.

It's an enthusiasm he traces back to a severely rationed wartime childhood. "I can still vividly remember my first sight of a banana," he says, savouring the mouth-watering ambience of his local west London delicatessen Mortimer & Bennett. "It wasn't until I went up to Cambridge that I had real coffee for the first time and discovered things like artichokes and aubergines."

Sampling a slice of the salami that Dan Mortimer imports from a small village butcher's shop just outside Boulogne, he adds: "Since then I've always had this fantasy that if I ever became really rich I'd have a man in a little green van travelling around the country, getting kippers from Craster, salmon from Loch Awe and so on. In a way, that's what this place does for me."

Dan Mortimer and Di Bennett set *up shop when Mr Mortimer was* made redundant from a clothing company. A friend at a dinner party suggested they should go into business together; six years later their establishment is a haven of fine foods for west Londoners.

While Ms Bennett looks after the financial side, Mr Mortimer selects the goodies with which the premises in Turnham Green are packed.

Among the specialities of the house are a wide selection of the finest olive oils, up to 60 English and continental cheeses, and basketfuls of the wild mushrooms and other edible fungi which Mr Mortimer collects himself when they are in season. "It's a passion Dan and I share," says Fortune, one of the leading lights of the Sixties satire boom, now better known to a new generation of television viewers for his "Long Johns" dialogue with friend and comedy partner John Bird on *Rory Bremner — Who Else?*

His interest in edible fungi began in Provence. "I was intrigued to discover that every Monday morning the papers there would print a list of the people who had died that weekend from eating poisonous mushrooms," he recalls.

"They're very big on hunting and gathering in that part of the world — it's a virility thing. But half the time they're not quite sure what they're eating. When I got home and found some parasol mushrooms in the field behind my house I went out and bought an illustrated book to make sure I'd identified them correctly. And I then was hooked."

It is often the fungi that look the most revolting that taste the best, he adds. One of his favourites is the sponge-like sparassis which grows on the trunks of rotten trees and resembles a human brain.

His wife, the film producer Emma Burge, got a nasty shock when she came on one unexpectedly in an overgrown part of her parents' garden in the New Forest. "She was poking around in some brambles when she let out a blood-curdling shriek. I rushed over, thinking she'd been bitten by an adder, and there was a sparassis the size of a small car. Unfortunately, they're no good to eat when they get that big."



Mortimer & Bennett: food haven

A dab hand in the kitchen, Fortune is renowned among friends for his mushroom risotto, made with porcini and arborio rice which Mortimer & Bennett imports from Lombardy.

John Bird, whom he first met in his Footlights revue days at Cambridge nearly 40 years ago, is not a regular dinner guest — but only because he is not that interested in food. "He and his wife are vegetarians and John is really quite ascetic — he doesn't drink and he eats very sparingly," Fortune says regretfully.

The pair, whose Long Johns routine has been expanded into a stage show, also have different attitudes to satire. "John is motivated by a moral disgust, whereas I see the farcical side," says Fortune. "I regard governments as an opportunity for a joke."

The two of them are currently working on a Channel 4 special on the first year of the Labour government and he says that there is no shortage of material even though the Tories always seemed to be the satirist's more natural prey.

"It has been difficult to get a handle on what is ghastly about this lot. It's a combination of the authoritarianism of a Labour Party with a big majority and the fact that they all hate each other's guts. It makes a refreshing change for us — after all, there are only so many jokes you can make about Michael Howard."

● *Mortimer & Bennett, 33 Turnham Green Terrace, London W4 1RG (0181-995 4145). Open Mon to Fri, 8.30am-6.30pm, Sat 8.30am-5.30pm.*

GADGETS



Novel idea: Towheads

HERE's one the horsey set is expected to lap up in huge quantities — covers for towbar balls. Anyone who has ever towed a horsebox will know that the towbar ball on, say, a Range Rover, is usually greasy and filthy. Rub against it and it can spell a nightmare for the dry cleaners.

The simplest practical answer has been a tennis ball with a slit in it. Now there is an amusing if somewhat juvenile alternative — Towheads. These are made from a rubberised plastic moulded into six characters — horse, dog, pig, duck, alsatian and labrador — which slip neatly over the towbar ball. They might be perfect in the country but would last a matter of minutes if left on vehicles parked in London.

TWO YELLOW elephant heads help to make travelling snoozes more comfortable for children with the Metro Safesit neck comforter. The soft-toy heads are joined to a U-shaped tubular cushion which slips easily around a child's neck to support the head. It means children can doze in the car in a more upright position and not get a cricked neck. The Safesit is intended for children aged four to 11 and is great for trains and planes too.

TIM WAPSHOTT

● *Towheads, £6.95 from The Gadget Shop (01482 860860). You can also order Towheads for £7.50, including delivery anywhere in the world, at the Towheads website (http://www.towheads.com).*
● *Metro Safesit, £12.99 plus p&p, from JoJo Maman Bébé (0171-352 5156).*

SAVE £20 ON THIS SUPERB OMEGA TROLLEY-CASE



Stylish trolley-case

only £49.95 (saving £20 on mrrp)

Times readers are offered this stylish trolley-case for only £49.95 including free delivery and packing, a saving of £20 on the mrrp of £69.95.

Specially developed for today's business traveller and ideal for short breaks, the Omega is designed for maximum use of space and with a telescopic tow-handle, top and side carry handles and wheeled base, it is extremely easy to transport.

The main compartment combines a two-fold zipped suiter section for hanging shirts, jackets and skirts, with a spacious suitcase area for other items and two sets of packing straps.

Other features include four front zip pockets, two expanding, these being a folio section and an organiser compartment with purse/wallet pocket, pen loops, mobile phone holder, etc.

Made from a durable tear-proof fabric and available in black, the Omega trolley-case measures 36 x 54 x 23cm.

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Chicken chic

EASTER PRESENTS



ABOVE: The Mini Chicki by Petra, £17.50, is ingenious for cooking four hard or soft boiled eggs at a time. It has a built-in buzzer that rings when they are ready. The head can be removed and used as a salt shaker. From The Home Place (0181-200 5588)

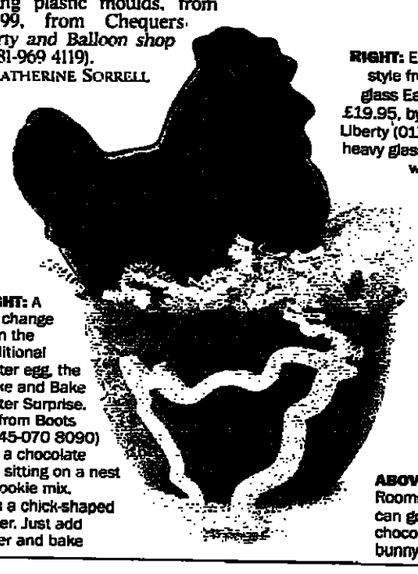
Fluffy lambs and lop-eared bunnies are all very well for children, but when it comes to presents for adults, other animal-shaped toys, chocolates and household goods can be more fun. For Easter, chickens seem a natural choice. After all, wherever a chicken goes, an egg will surely follow.

For anyone determined to go chick crazy this Easter, there's no end of choice. As well as chocolate hens and a wide range of kitchen equipment from storage pots to egg cups, there are furnishing fabrics, wall tiles, ornaments such as Emily Firmin's wacky papier-mâché sculptures and, of course, children's toys and clothing.

The chicken hat from Hopscotch is our favourite dressing-up item for kids. Vibrant in yellow with a red comb, it fastens around the neck with Velcro leaving a hole to cockle-doodle-do from.

Thomas Goode caters for adults who don't mind paying grown-up prices with delicate enamel eggs, £65, which come with a perspex display holder for safe keeping. To brighten your table without spending a fortune, Whittard's hand-crafted paper chicks are colourful, cheap and sit in their own spiral egg cup, £4 each. Make your own chocolate eggs using plastic moulds, from £2.99, from Chequers Party and Balloon shop (0181-969 4119).

KATHERINE SORRELL



RIGHT: A fun change from the traditional Easter egg, the Make and Bake Easter Surprise, £4 from Boots (0845-070 8090) has a chocolate hen sitting on a nest of cookie mix, plus a chick-shaped cutter. Just add water and bake



BELOW: For a delicious Easter breakfast of boiled eggs and toast, use this chick egg cup, £3.75 from John Lewis (0171-629 7711 for branches)

BELOW: Keep babies happy and gurgling with this elasticated chicken pram string. It costs £10 from Spottiswoode Trading (01903 733123 for mail order and stockists)

LEFT: Thomas Goode's dainty enamel miniature egg, £65, is decorated with a mural of yellow chicks and orange tulips (0171-499 2823)

You can store two dozen eggs in this chromed-wire chicken basket making an attractive addition to a country-style kitchen. £12.95, from the McCord catalogue (0990 535455)

RIGHT: Eat boiled eggs in style from this designer glass Early Bird egg cup, £19.95, by Leonardo, from Liberty (0171-734 1234). A heavy glass base is topped with an insulating perspex lid decorated with a bird and a flower

RIGHT: Whittard (0800-525 092) hand-crafted paper chicks are colourful, cheap and come sitting in their own spiral egg cup, £4 each

ABOVE: Revellers in Harrogate will find chocolate nests, £4.98, at Betty's Café Tea Rooms (01423 504073) with two praline-filled song thrush eggs. While Londoners can go to Putney Bridge River Restaurant & Bar (0181-780 2011), which is selling chocolate eggs from its new patisserie, and be treated to a handmade chocolate bunny filled with buttons and mini eggs, £5, decorated with toy feathered chickens

ABOVE: For dressing-up fun try this chicken hat, which comes in two sizes, £14 incl p&p from Hopscotch (0181-674 9853 for mail order and stockists)

Photographs by Des Jenson
Research by Mary Ann Percy

هكذا من الأصل



RIGHT: Deep burgundy silk mix two-tone suit, £880; shirt, £330; tie, £65, Gucci, 18 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 6707) Brown leather snaffle loafers, £155, Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-629 6903).

Photographs by **Anna Stevenson.** Grooming by **Firyal** using Paul Mitchell Hair Care Products. Styling by **Amandip Uppal.** Model: **Jamie**

LEFT: Black jacket with velvet collar, from £600 factory made or £2,500 bespoke, Hardy Amies, 14 Savile Row, W1 (0171-734 2436). Green two-tone shirt, £112, Agnès B, 35-36 Floral Street, WC2 (0171-379 1992). Red silk tie, £65, Gucci, as above

Shine of the times



ABOVE: Grey two-tone cotton and viscose coat, £169, Morgan Homme, Unit 29, Queen Victoria Quarter, Leeds (0171-383 3888) Grey linen shirt, £69.95, Jigsaw, 27 Brook Street, W1 (0171-499 2521)



"The choice of a new suit is a serious matter; almost as serious as the buying of a new carpet." Sir Hardy Amies writes in his guide to men's dressing, *The Englishman's Suit.* "But it has to be with a tie; a suit without a tie looks awful."

This season, thousands of men will be taking the Savile Row couturier's words to heart, forsaking the casual approach of last year's dressing for that of the dandy. Bland black eveningwear has been replaced by a mass of bright colours, graded textures and a shine that a Fifties encyclopedia salesman would have been proud of. It's not the sheen strutted by John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever*, but it's pretty dazzling.

Ozwald Boateng, whose clients include Seal, Boy George, Angus Deayton and Mick Hucknell, has taken shine and colour to their extremes this summer, with a range of two-tone suits that change in different lighting, from purple to green, or orange to brown. "Two-tone suits are a way of using bright colours subtly," says the designer. "Although I will use bright slashes of orange — for example, wearing an orange shirt with a grey flannel suit — using two-toned mohair is more subtle. And men are definitely taking to colour more. Just looking at the high street, it is evident: even traditional shops like Austin Reed or Aquascutum are into it."

Etro, the Italian purveyor of multicoloured garments on Bond Street, has also entered into the spirit of our new rainbow nation, describing the mood of its peacock-like collection as "experimental theatre in the Seventies, where light and shadow run after each other". It is as much about grand gestures as behind-the-scenes glitter.

On the catwalks, the colours were as lively as the textures. As well as shades of grey and blue, there were hot, spicy hues. Even Valentino man was decked out in shine: an elegant "négligé chic" that was fluid and soft, its glimmering fabric sending out what the company describes as "modern lights". Its denim suits, normally for daywear, were tailored and glistening too.

Paul Smith also joined the shine brigade, mixing satiny cotton with light striped velvets and silk crepes; to add an extra-dandy edge, his models in Milan wore dainty embroidered slippers in complementary colours. Kenzo used traditional fabrics such as cotton combined with shiny manufactured textures; Ermenegildo Zegna utilised silk mohair mixes to give a luminous, iridescent quality.

The colours of the catwalks may have been extreme, but the styles were conventional — something of which Sir Hardy heartily approves. "The suit carries with it the prestige of two centuries," he says, "and if you alter it too drastically, you destroy its powers and thus its value." The latest tuxedo in the collection, for example, is a single-breasted, five-button model with a velvet ghillie collar *(see top left)*.

On the day I met him, Sir Hardy's designer Ian Garlant was wearing a thigh-length fitted wool coat ("We never refer to a jacket"), updating a dandyish style to fit in with a Nineties wardrobe.

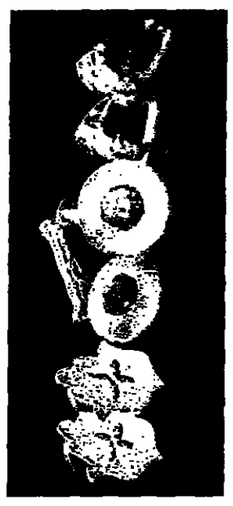
Sir Hardy may believe that a tie is essential for evenings, but Mr Garlant says that many of their younger clients are now wearing crew-neck sweaters in soft wool. "Many of our clients are international entrepreneurs who make their own rules," he says, "so they can afford to dress as they like. And if that means not wearing a tie, so be it."

With or without a tie, today's man can break out of the greys and into an array of coloured eveningwear, whether it is from a high street chain such as Next (£170), Jigsaw (£265) and Marks & Spencer (£175) or a bespoke Savile Row tailor (about £2,000).

Worn with the softest cotton shirts or woollen crew necks and the finest patent shoes, the evening suit can look both sophisticated and modern.

Sir Hardy may not approve of these suits without ties, their cuts — or, most heinously — that the coats are unbuttoned. But he does admit, reluctantly, that the dress sense of young men is changing: "The elderly are advised not to criticise the clothes of the young," he says. "It is ageing."

LISA GRAINGER



THREE OF A KIND

Simple cufflinks that are eye-catching but not flashy will complete the peacock effect. *LG*

TOP: Hand of Fatima matt silver stud cufflinks, £85, Wright & Teague, Liberty, W1 (0171-336 8633)

MIDDLE: Round silver and pink stone chain cufflink, £29.95, Simon Carter, Fenwick, Bond Street, W1 (0171-629 9161)

BOTTOM: Sterling silver cutaway stud cufflinks, £135, Aquascutum, 100 Regent Street, W1 (0800 282 922)



RIGHT: Burgundy two-tone silk mix suit, £295, Jigsaw Menswear, as left. Red silk two-tone shirt, £112, Agnès B, as above

FAR LEFT: Purple-grey two-tone wool-mix suit, £679, Paul Smith, 41-43 Floral Street, W1 (0171-836 7828). Burgundy mesh V-neck T-shirt, £70, Gucci, as above

LEFT: Grey two-tone cotton suit, £300, French Connection, 99 Long Acre, WC2 (0171-399 7200). White sheer knit T-shirt, £60, Helmut Lang Jeans, Browns Focus, 38-39 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-491 7833)

TIM HUELIN



Potato farmer Ernie le Feuvre unearths another lucrative crop of his Jersey Royals and prays the frost does not affect the harvest. "We are in the risk game," he says

Spud that struck gold

Peter Birkett examines the mysterious history of a unique potato universally acknowledged as a breed apart – the Jersey Royal

The first taste of its delicate, earthy flavour is as evocative as the cuckoo's call, a culinary confirmation of spring that no other variety of vegetable can imitate. In a modern world in which the seasons have been sidelined by supermarkets' ability to import year-round summer veg, the Jersey Royal potato stands alone; a one-off in taste and texture attainable not in Zimbabwe, Kenya, Egypt or even the Canaries, but by farmers privileged enough to live among the millionaires and tax exiles on the Bailiwick of Jersey.

The Jersey Royal, once known affectionately and accurately by the island's farmers as the Jersey Fluke, will grow nowhere else in the world; not in England, France or even on neighbouring Guernsey.

The result of this inexplicable quirk of nature is a huge industry that begins with a trickle from the glasshouses in mid-February and swings into gear around now. The kidney-shaped tubers are prised from the precipitous potato terraces on Jersey's southern slopes until mid-June, when the English new potatoes take over the market. In that time almost 60,000 tonnes worth an estimated £27 million will have crossed the sea to Portsmouth.

In the past few months 250 million seed potatoes have been painstakingly prepared, sprouted and tenderly inserted in the sandy and fertile Jersey soil. Every process, from rubbing off unwanted shoots to arranging the tubers on special sprouting trays and even the planting itself, is done by hand.

High on the bountiful and favoured terraces, known locally as "cotils", where the very earliest outdoor tubers are nurtured beneath sheets of polythene, even the back-breaking work of digging them up again has to be done manually. But for those farmers lucky enough to own or rent the early cotils, the rewards are fabulous. This week as the first of the Jerseys reach the supermarkets they will command prices of up to £1.50 a lb, and that means that even after the middlemen's cut, the earliest of the 150 or so Jersey growers can expect a wholesale return of £1 per lb.

The Jersey Royal began as a happy accident one night in 1880, when Hugh de la Haye, a farmer, gave a dinner for some of his neighbouring smallholders at Mont Cochon, near Jersey's capital, St Helier.

Earlier in the day he had been presented with two huge, round potatoes by the proprietors of Le Caudey's store on St Helier's Esplanade, and de la Haye, intrigued that one of the tubers had 16 "eyes", or potential shoots, passed it around the dinner table as a curiosity.

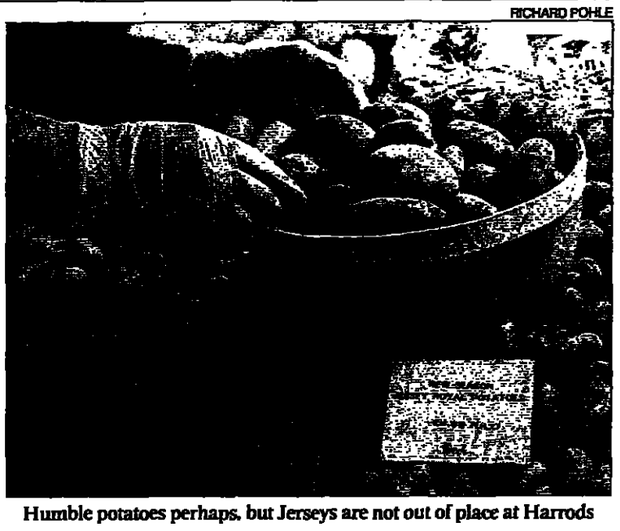
The guests were impressed and at the end of the meal, the potato was cut into 16 pieces, each with an eye. One piece was damaged, but next day de la Haye planted the other 15 on a cotil high above Jersey's Bellozanne Valley.

The following spring as he dug tentatively at the new plants, de la Haye was stunned to discover that each had produced not only a large and very early crop but that each tuber was kidney-shaped. The Fluke, or Jersey Royal, was born.

De la Haye, a deeply religious member of the Plymouth Brethren, spent the next 12 years increasing the seed stock, and in 1892 his grateful fellow farmers presented him with an illuminated address and a purse of gold as "a feeble recognition of our appreciation of the service you have rendered to your native isle by the introduction of the Royal Jersey Fluke".

The potato's creator never married and died in 1906. Throughout his life he refused to capitalise on his discovery but left a legacy that was to bring prosperity to generations of Jersey farmers who were able to produce large quantities of earthy, thin-skinned and firm-textured new potatoes weeks ahead of their English rivals.

RICHARD POHLE



Humble potatoes perhaps, but Jerseys are not out of place at Harrods

"And that was the secret," says former grower and veteran Jersey exporter Roy Mourant. "To hit the market ahead of even Cornwall with a product unachievable in other places. The miracle for Jersey was that it won't grow anywhere else."

Not that it hasn't been tried: first on the neighbouring Channel Islands, then in England, France, the Scilly Isles, Israel, Cyprus and even Italy. "But the yields were almost zero," says Peter Bastion, chief officer of the States of Jersey Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. "They have had some success with it in trials in Tasmania and the South Island of New Zealand, but happily they are not in the northern hemisphere."

The mystery of the Royal Jersey runs deep indeed, but experts believe that its singular habitat is connected with the island's southerly "tilt", coupled with a complex stress factor brought on by the recurrent exposure of the seed potatoes to viruses.

"We constantly clean up the seed by sending it away for re-breeding, but when the cleaned seed returns it produces a great deal of foliage and is much later than the normal Jersey Royal," says Mr Bastion. "It takes some seasons to reach the old earliness and we believe it is the stress induced by the virus which makes the plant crop so early and heavily."

That ability to beat the opposition by being first to provide a crop in bulk is the secret of Jersey's success. But for the island's growers, it is always a substantial gamble.

One frost can put the crop back by weeks — and that can signal ruin. Ernie le Feuvre, one of Jersey's potato moguls, says that the chance of frost is his most constant fear.

"We are in the risk game," he says. "In the past few years we've been getting away with it, but we all know we are playing for high stakes."

If a frost penetrates the sheets of polythene that can be pulled over the threatened plants like a cover over the wicket at Lords, the damage for Jersey's potato farmers can be financially crippling.

"The timing is absolutely crucial," says John Neal of the Jersey Produce Marketing Organisation. "Because once the English crop gets under way the price falls and it becomes uneconomic to transport the Jersey crop. Eventually it just has to be dumped."

Despite the continuing clamour for Jerseys, Mr Neal is concerned that changing eating trends among younger Britons poses a long-term threat to the potato trade.

"Younger people are eating pizzas and pasta and are no longer brought up to recognise the taste of the Jersey Royal," he says. "Part of our job is to educate them about that and persuade them that the higher cost of our potato is a price worth paying."

Mervyn Wycherley

AN article (Fresh food, good taste and right royal ingredients, *Weekend*, January 31) stated that Mervyn Wycherley had been sacked by his former employer, Diana, Princess of Wales. In fact, Mr Wycherley was made redundant after 22 years' service in the Royal Household and left on good terms. We apologise for the embarrassment caused.

Drink



Jane MacQuitty

Spring is in the air – so celebrate the sunshine with a surefire winner from a truly vintage year for Alsace

Spring has brought with it one of the best Alsace vintages that I have tasted — the clean, concentrated and intensely fruity 1996. Other great Alsace vintages such as 1990 and 1989 are at times so opulent and fat that they are hard to drink and appreciate.

By comparison, the 1996 has a healthy, fresh ripeness and acidity that makes it stand out from the crowd.

The cool patch in September 1996 that slowed down the vine's progress was responsible for the length and strength of mouth-watering fruit acidity and flavour. And October's heatwave provided the necessary ripeness of a top year.

This winning combination, together with the lack of *botrytris*, or noble rot, has produced some lovely, shining, healthy, dry wines that faithfully reflect the true flavours of each Alsace grape.

The best news for drinkers is that the 1996 Alsace vintage makes great spring drinking now. Because of its essential underpinning of acidity, it will also benefit from being cellared.



Hugel's 1996 is particularly successful and the 1996 Gentil from Hugel (Sainsbury's, £5.65) contains at least 50 per cent of the four noble Alsace grapes of Gewürztraminer, Riesling, Pinot Gris and Muscat.

To my mind, this elegant, floral, violet-scented white typifies the fruit and flower garden wines of Alsace. Contact The Wine Society (01438 741177) if you would like to buy some 1996 Hugels to lay down.

The best of the bunch here include the tremendous green apple-scented freshness of the aperitif-suited 1996 Pinot Blanc (£5.95).

The finer Jubilee Hugel wines, or reserves, are definitely worth paying extra for, and the 1996 Riesling Jubilee (£13.50) is full of deliciously ripe and intense lime flavours.

The 1996 Tokay-Pinot Gris Jubilee, full of tremendous gutsy spice (£14), shows just how good the Pinot Gris grape was in this vintage.

The Wine Society liked it so much it is even offering it in magnums (£95 for three).

The Gewürztraminer grape did not fare quite as well in 1996, but Hugel's Jubilee edition is a deeply elegant, spritzy peach and grapefruit stashed bottle capable of lasting a decade or more (£12.50). This Wine Society offer closes on April 18.

With mixed weather this spring, a good bottle to have to hand is a tangy, piquant fino. Serve it with a bowl of green olives, or toasted almonds as they do in Spain, and you will have arranged your own personal patch of spring sunshine.

Sherry sales were up by 6 per cent here last year, making the UK the leading sherry export market for the first time since 1990. The big fino brands such as Tio Pepe and La Ina, with their wishy-washy 15.5 per cent alcohol, do not currently inspire, so trade up to finer own-label offerings such as Waitrose's nutty-yeasty 16.5 per cent Fino from Luis Caballero, just £2.87 a half-bottle.

Valdespino continues to produce its glorious high-strength, high-flavour sherries. So plump for either the strong, yeasty, floral 16.5 per cent Deliciosa Manzanilla (Oddbins Fine Wine, £6.49; Lea & Sandeman, 301 Fulham Road, London SW10, £6.95), or the fuller, richer Inocente, a great 16.8 per cent Fino (Oddbins Fine Wine, £7.49; Lea & Sandeman, £7.50).

If it's a straight, spring-like white you want, try the latest 1997 vintages, full of fresh, newborn zip and zing. Western Australia's fine 1997 Ironstone Semillon-Chardonnay is one of its most invigorating vintages yet, with plenty of zesty, lemon and grapefruit finesse (Unwins, £6.19; Majestic Wine Warehouse and Fullers, £6.49).

New Zealand has some very toothsome spring bottles, among them the 1997 Montana Awatere Reserve Vineyard Selection Riesling (Oddbins, £7.99), which is full of racy, floral citrus fruit that will warm up any dull spring day.

Chardonnay and riesling are all very well, but the one grape that truly puts a spring in my step is sauvignon. No white grape could possibly be more verdantly thrilling than this and New Zealand makes some of the greatest in the world.

If you want to economise, your best choice is Villa Maria's joyous, herby, gooseberry-rich 1997 Private Bin Sauvignon Blanc (Thresher Group £6.49; Oddbins and Victoria Wine, £6.99).

If you are in the mood to splash out, your best New Zealand choice is the 1997 Cloudy Bay Sauvignon, whose grassy, mouthwateringly floral fruit is reminiscent this year of capsicums and green tomatoes. Here's to spring.

NEXT WEEK:
Easter wines

Meet the original spice girl



Valerie Campbell: "West Indian food is underestimated"

FROM the very beginning, Naomi Campbell wanted to be in the spotlight. Her mother Valerie, a dancer, travelled the world from Athens to Tehran, performing before Aristotle Onassis and the Shah of Iran. She was an obvious source of inspiration, and to develop Naomi's talents as a dancer and entertainer, she sent her to Barbara Speake's school from the age of five.

At 12, Naomi started at Italia Conti stage school, and by 16 she had her first modelling job. Valerie Campbell brought Naomi up with strong support from her parents, who cared for their granddaughter for long periods when their daughter worked overseas.

Valerie recalls her daughter's youth as extremely hectic, filled with dance lessons in every step from tap to ballet. "She was hyperactive in a very positive way. She went to school from Monday to Friday. On Saturday she went to Italia Conti, then on Sunday she danced in competitions.

HOME COOKING

Supermodel Naomi Campbell has always liked her food hot

"I remember getting her costume ready, making journeys all over the place and watching thousands of kids going crazy. Then there was the trek home. Sometimes there was disappointment and sometimes she was high with excitement if she won."

Naomi had a healthy appetite to fuel this constant onslaught of activity. "She loves West Indian food — rice and peas and curried goat. She has always liked spicy food. She always liked her food very hot. There's only a few daring people who eat food as hot as she does.



Naomi has exotic tastes

"But when I cooked bubble 'n' squeak once a week she detested it. She always used to get herself a sandwich or something from the tuck shop on that day."

The budding supermodel was keen on restaurants long before her involvment in the Fashion Café. "I used to take her to Lyons tea shop for high tea. She used to like that. There were no McDonalds in those days."

Naomi's globe-trotting lifestyle means that she now likes to eat dishes from all over the world. Her mother says: "She likes her rice and peas as well as all the exotic bits and bobs that she has discovered while travelling."

Not all of these "bits and bobs" meet with her mother's approval. "I was with her in Milan and she was eating snails — I couldn't believe it. She tried to get me to eat one and I said 'you must be mad'. She was with her friends and they were showing each other how to pull them out of the shells. All I could see were the antennae."

Despite a love of Italian and Greek food, Valerie's heart is in West Indian fare which she feels is underestimated as a world cuisine. To this end, she is going to be guest chef on the Carlton Food Network, where she will prepare a range of her favourite West Indian dishes including Escovitched fish, creamed sweet potatoes, fried plantain and fried breadfruit.

JOE WARWICK

● *Valerie Campbell is on* Food Network Daily *on Carlton Food Network every day at noon from April 20 to April 24.*

STAR BUYS

Chardonnay Brut, Joseph Lefèvre, Côte d'Or. Sainsbury's, reduced to £4.11 a bottle or buy six for £3.90 each until April 18.

Sainsbury's Easter egg to the nation is a cracking 17.5 per cent cut on all its fizz — including champagne. This brilliant Burgundian méthode champenoise is easily the best. With a fresh, lemony marzipan-scented palate, this dry, slim 11.5 per cent chardonnay sparkler could even cope with a slice of Easter's simnel cake.



Penfolds Magill Tawny, half bottle down £1 to £4.99 at Victoria Wine or £5.99 at Unwins, Safeway and Booth's Supermarkets.

Australia's answer to tawny port is this glorious 19 per cent Liqueur Wine full of dry, tangy, tealeaf-scented spice. Magill Tawny is one of the few wines I know that can cope with chocolate — everything from sticky milk bars to bitter black Valrhona. Wine-loving chocaholics should not attempt Easter without Magill.



BEST OF THE REST
Sainsbury's Extra Dry bubbly drops £3.51 to £9.44 a bottle on a multi-tiered discount. But the finer, more floral Tartinger is the better buy at £17.31, down £5.68, and if you stump up for the cheap, tasty 1996 duo of Ed's White and Red from southern France, down 50p to £2.99. Offers close April 27

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The Times Cook

Though small in stature, quail has a big enough flavour to earn its place at the heart of any Easter feast



Frances Bissell

Lamb, chicken and rabbit spring to mind as suitable Easter luncheon dishes for next week, but since I have recently given recipes for all of these, let us consider quail.

These small birds used to be caught as game in Britain hundreds of years ago, but are now kept and raised commercially. I have never come across organic quail, but would certainly prefer to buy birds raised under this regime.

Additive-free quail, reared on a local farm in less intensive conditions than commercial quail farms have, in the past, been available by mail order from Graig Farm in Powys *(01597 851655, fax: 01597 851991)*, winner of last year's Soil Association Organic Food Award. I hope it will stock them again.

Quail was the subject set for this year's Roux Diners Club Scholarship open to chefs under 28, a recipe for four, using eight quail, and two appropriate garnishes.

As a judge, I always learn a great deal in this competition, a worth-



while one in the development of the next generation of chefs. The winner works for three months in the kitchen of the Michelin three-star chef of his or her choice. Stephen Love, last year's winner, worked in Alain Ducasses' kitchen in Paris. Previous winners have gone on to further success, such as Andrew Fairley, who has achieved a Michelin star in Glasgow at One Devonshire Gardens.

It was disappointing this year to see no women entrants, a situation that hardly reflects modern British kitchens. There are several women chefs in the kitchen of Gary Rhodes, another of the judges, as there are at Le Gavroche and the Waterside Inn, both Roux brothers' establishments.

But back to the quail recipes. Those with harmonious ingredients were the most appealing: that is, they did not try to combine Mediterranean with oriental flavours in one dish. One or two recipes picked up the *cailles aux raisins* theme, and used raisins or grapes with wine or marsala and balsamic vinegar. The best garnishes played a supporting role to the quail, and did not dominate. Risotto, polenta and pasta featured in several recipes, and these go well with quail. So too do lentils, cabbage, peas, leeks, mash and wild mushrooms.

One garnish I particularly liked was a quail egg, lightly poached first, enclosed in a raviolo and then cooked and served with quail and cabbage. On the whole, I prefer quail to look like quail, rather than boned and rolled into a *ballottine*. If you plan to bone eight quail, leave yourself plenty of time.

The following quail recipes will see you through Easter lunch and several spring dinners. I have, for each, suggested a suitable starch and a simple vegetable accompaniment. Serve asparagus or artichokes for starters, a fruit fool for pud, and before that a green salad and some farmhouse cheeses, and you have a useful blueprint menu for spring entertaining.

On the subject of artichokes, rather than waste the artichoke stalk by twisting it off, pare off the outer layer to reach the tender core, which is just as good to eat as the artichoke heart.

Pot-roasted quails
Serves 6

- 6 or 12 oven-ready quails
- 2tbsp fruit vinegar, such as raspberry
- 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 shallots, finely chopped
- 6 sprigs fresh tarragon
- 6-8tbsp good dry white wine
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Trim and tie the quails neatly, if they have not already been trussed. Rub them all over with the vinegar.

Preheat the oven to 180C, gas mark 4. Heat the olive oil in a casserole and fry the shallot without browning it. Strip the leaves from the tarragon. Break stalks into three or four pieces, and place inside the cavity of the birds.

Fry the quails with the shallot until browned. Add most of the tarragon leaves, saving some for garnish, and the wine, and bring to simmering point. Cover the casserole and transfer to the oven. Cook 20 to 25 minutes. Place the quails in a china dish. Strain the pan juices over the birds. Season and garnish with tarragon. Serve immediately or cold, when the juices have set. Suggested accompaniments: potato and garlic purée and steamed broccoli florets.

Spiced lemon roasted quails
Serves 6

- 6 or 12 oven-ready quails
- 1 large lemon
- 1-2tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1tsp salt
- 1tsp each black pepper, ground coriander and cumin
- ½tsp each ground cardamom, cloves and cinnamon
- 150ml chicken stock, white wine or water

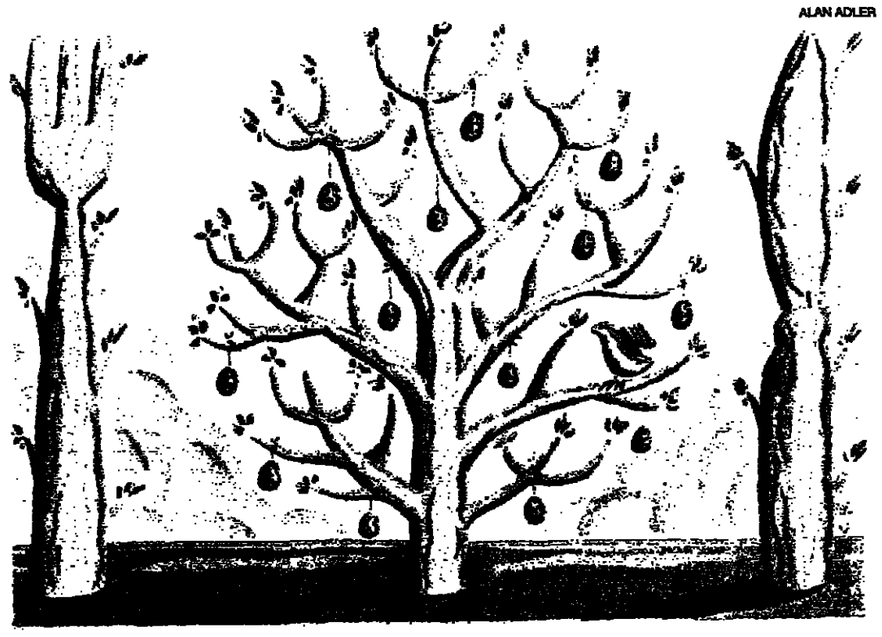
Cut the wing tips from the birds, and wipe thoroughly. Shave six spirals of lemon zest and put inside the birds. Rub with lemon juice and cut up the lemon and put a piece of lemon inside each. Brush with olive oil, then dust with the spice mixture.

Brown the birds in a lidded sauté pan or shallow casserole. Remove them while you deglaze the pan with the liquid, scraping up any residue. Put the birds back, cover and cook on top of the stove or in a preheated oven at 180C, gas mark 4 for 20-25 minutes. After seasoning, the birds can be put into roasting bags and roasted. Suggested accompaniments: saffron rice and braised, spiced onions.

Quail, sorrel and parsley pie
Serves 4

- Breasts from 6 quails
- 150ml quail or chicken stock
- 500g leeks, trimmed, washed and finely chopped
- 25g unsalted butter
- 500g spinach or chard, rinsed, dried and roughly chopped
- 25g sorrel, shredded
- 50g flat leaf parsley, finely chopped

ALAN ADLER



- 3 free range eggs
- Salt and pepper
- 225g puff, flaky or shortcrust pastry

Poach the quail breasts in chicken stock for five minutes. Remove, and retain the stock. Sweat the leeks in butter for five to ten minutes, then add the spinach and herbs.

Line a 1-litre pie dish with half the mixture, lay quail breasts on top, and cover with remaining vegetables. Beat two eggs with stock, and pour over the mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Roll out the pastry and lay it over dish, pinching down edges to seal. Make a hole in the top of the pastry to allow the steam to escape. Brush with remaining egg beaten with a tablespoon of milk, and bake in preheated oven at 180C, gas mark 4, for 25-35 minutes. Suggested accompaniments: peas and boiled new potatoes.

Quails and quail eggs with oriental flavours
Serves 8

- 8 quails
- 2-3tbsp traditionally brewed Japanese soy sauce
- 1tbsp clear honey
- 2tbsp rice or sherry vinegar
- 4-5tbsp rice wine or dry Amontillado sherry
- 1tsp Chinese five-spice powder
- 1tsp freshly grated ginger
- 2 tbsp groundnut oil
- 200ml quail or chicken stock
- 2 dozen quail eggs
- Toasted sesame seed oil
- Fresh coriander or basil for garnish



Cut the quails into four pieces, two breasts, two legs, and use the back and trimmings to make stock. Mix the next six ingredients and then marinate the pieces of quail for a couple of hours, or overnight, if more convenient.

Remove from marinade and let the juices drip back. In a heavy frying pan heat the oil and fry the quail pieces until just done, which will take eight to ten minutes with such small pieces. Remove from the pan, and put to one side.

Pour the stock and marinade into the pan, and boil, scraping up the cooking residues. Reduce by about a third. Adjust the seasoning, and add a spot of lime juice if liked.

Meanwhile, boil the quail eggs, and shell when cool enough to handle. Pile them into the middle of a dish with the pieces of quail around them.

Pour the strained sauce over meat and eggs, and finally add a thread of sesame oil, and fresh coriander or basil leaves for garnish.

Suggested accompaniments: steamed rice or boiled rice noodles, and stir-fried Chinese leaves.

● *For further information about the Roux Diners Scholarship Club, call 0181-940 4144.*

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NEXT WEEK:
Home cooking

THE PERFECT SOUFFLÉ

Rising to the occasion

ONCE you have made your first soufflé, you will wonder why you ever thought it difficult.

■ INGREDIENTS: To serve six: 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan, 500mls milk, salt, freshly ground black pepper, freshly grated nutmeg, 50g butter, seven free-range eggs, five of them separated, 50g plain flour, sifted, and since the soufflé has to be flavoured, 75g cheese, grated.

■ METHOD: Butter a 1-litre soufflé dish and sprinkle with the Parmesan. Put three-quarters of the milk in a saucepan with the seasoning and butter. Bring to the boil. Beat the two whole eggs with the five egg yolks, flour and remaining milk, and stir into the boiling milk over a low heat. Stir until the mixture thickens and remove from the heat. Whisk the egg whites until stiff. Stir the cheese into the sauce, and fold in the egg whites. Pour into the prepared dish and bake in a preheated oven at 200C, gas mark 6 for 22 minutes. The centre of the soufflé will be slightly runny when you serve it — this acts as the sauce.

NEXT WEEK:
The perfect prawn cocktail

HENRY HARRIS'S CHEAT OF THE WEEK



THE best tiramisu I ever had the good fortune to eat was made by Giorgio Locatelli at his London restaurant Zafferano. It had the required richness but more importantly, it did indeed pick me up.

Tiramisu is so often too heavy and this version showed a true understanding of the dessert: despite being rich, it was also very light.

It set me to thinking what a great fast pud it would be to make at home. But to keep it fast, one would have to forego making the sponge fingers. What makes it a proper cheat is obtaining good, fresh espresso coffee to give it that real kick.

I am not going to give you a recipe for tiramisu, rather a variation that will give you a great pud. I have added some chocolate to the recipe, which will enrich it considerably. **Sponge fingers and espresso coffee (serves four).** You will need: 150g dark chocolate; 12 sponge fingers; 4 shots espresso; 50ml of rum; 250g mascarpone; 125ml whipping cream; 3tbsp caster sugar (a little more will be required if your chocolate is very bitter).

Method: Take four small dishes and place three fingers in the bottom of each one. Then mix the coffee and rum and pour some into each dish. Set aside. Break up the chocolate and place it in a small bowl over some simmering water and leave to melt.

Then place the mascarpone, cream and sugar in a bowl and add the melted chocolate, whisk this together, gently — you do not want the mixture to be stiff, rather a slightly firm yet sloppy affair, and spoon this mixture over the soaked sponge fingers. Chill in the fridge for an hour and serve.

● *The author is head chef at Harvey Nichols' fifth-floor restaurant in Knightsbridge.*



THE DRINKS THAT TIME FORGOT

Pomagne

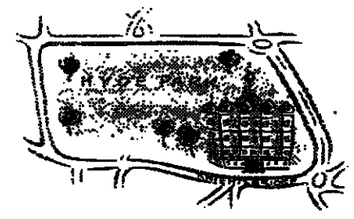
JUST 25 years ago, H.P. Bulmer's Pomagne was still marketed as "champagne cider", a (very) cheap and cheerful treat for Granny.

A big French "*non*" put paid to that bit of marketing genius, although Pomagne is still "turned" in the bottle, much as champagne is.

For this, we have to thank Percy Bulmer, who visited the Champagne region to study *remuage* techniques before launching Pomagne in 1906. Residual yeasts fermented the added sugar to an alcohol level (abv) in the bottle of 6 per cent — until Italian *spumante* producers increased the duty on sparkling cider above 5.5 per cent abv. Bulmer's retreated to 5.3 per cent.

A cheapskate bubbly image has left Pomagne with something of a siege mentality. Two future options suggest themselves: lose the "fake champagne" tag by promoting Pomagne as a delightful accompaniment to the English table. Or Bulmers, by Royal Appointment suppliers of cider to HM The Queen, might persuade those gentlemen of the road for whom cider remains a favourite, that by drinking Pomagne at £1.49 a bottle they could cut quite a dash among their peers.

KATE STRONACH



The hotel with the park attached

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CONSUMING INTERESTS: CORDIALS

■ Memories of the homemade lemonade served at village cricket matches by the vicar's wife in my childhood were stirred by this week's taste test of cordials, juices and other refreshing drinks of a sometimes organic, but always non-alcoholic nature. Alas, those far-off days and well-remembered flavours that were fondly savoured are gone forever, but today's marketeers are pushing a variety of ideas for using their concentrates on yoghurt, pancakes, ice-creams, sorbets, fruit salads and jellies as well as simply diluted in glasses. Full marks for trying.

ROBIN YOUNG



Ekoland Dicksaft Brombeer, Organic Apple and Blackberry Concentrate, *£4.79 for 330ml.* From Planet Organic, 47 Westbourne Grove, London, W2 5SH (0171-221 7171).
Claims: 100 per cent fruit. Imported from Holland.
Verdict: Blackberry makes a difference, but its flavour is diluted with mundane apple. The bottle carries no visible guidance as to how much water to add. ★★½

Bottle Green Drinks Company Lemongrass Cordial with Ginger, *£2.50 for 37.5cl.* Tesco, Sainsbury, Somerfield, Waitrose and Booths.
Claims: Makes four litres. "No artificial flavours, colourings or sweeteners."
Verdict: Fiery ginger in competition with tender lemongrass makes an interesting combination. Less familiar and more intriguing than the others in this trial. ★★★★

Crone's Organic Apple Juice, *£1.45 for 74cl in cases of 12.* Fairview (01379 687687). Also Infinity Foods and health food and farm shops.
Claims: "Handmade from carefully selected fruit."
Verdict: A winner of the Soil Association best non-alcoholic beverage award three years running. Clean flavour and good balance of sweetness and acidity. ★★★★

Cariad Elderflower Cordial Blodau'r Ysgaw, *£3.25 for 37.5cl.* Llanerch Vineyard (01443 225877).
Claims: "Makes up to four litres. Made from hand-picked elderflowers infused in sugar and lemons."
Verdict: Flavour dominated by lemon. Over-sweet. ★

Belvoir Elderflower Cordial, *£2.49 for 37.5cl.* Belvoir Fruit Farms, Belvoir, Grantham, Lincolnshire (01476 870286).
Claims: "Infused from fragrant hand-picked elderflowers . . . Makes sensational spritzers."
Verdict: The cordial is said to make sublime sorbets, to enhance desserts and to make superb hot toddy. Diluted with tap water, it had a similar sweetness to the German wine industry's lolly waters. Overall, quite a well-judged concoction. ★★★

Meridian Organic Apple Concentrate, *£2.99 for 250ml.* Health food stores. Ring Goodness Foods 01327 706611 for stockists.
Claims: "Makes over two litres." Produce of Yugoslavia.
Verdict: Dilute with seven parts water and stir well. Pleasant but not exciting. ★½

Thorncroft Traditional Nettle Cordial, *£2.85 for 37.5cl.* Health & Diet Centres and independent health food stores.
Claims: "Dilute 15:1. Concentrated form of the popular soft drinks of Victorian England, Nettle Ale."
Verdict: Not even 15:1 dilution gets rid of a syrupy effect. ★★

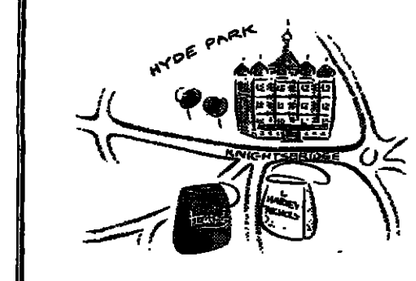
Farmer Giles Organic Blackcurrant Cordial, *£3.95 for 50cl.* Organics Direct 1-7 Willow Street, London (0171-729 2828).
Claims: "100 per cent pure." Dilute with four parts water.
Verdict: Packs less punch than Ribena but the sweetness is kept well within bounds. ★★½

Rocks Organic Lemon Cordial, *£3.25 for 36cl.* Waitrose and health food shops.
Claims: Concentrated. Makes three litres. Made from organically grown lemons and organic sugar.
Verdict: Does not have the tangy edge of fresh lemons but a mellow, tame flavour. Very sweet. ★½

James White Bramley Apple Juice, *£1.95 for 75cl.* James White, Ashbocking, Ipswich (01473 890111).
Claims: No added water, sugar or preservatives. Supporting the National Trust.
Verdict: Crisp, dry, tart. ★★★★

MORE FOOD & DRINK IN the times magazine

Jean Christophe Novelli on cooking with sugar
Jonathan Meades in RK Stanleys, "a 1950s Woolworth"



The hotel with shops attached

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'I hope that this birthday, which propels me a year closer to my imminent dotage, does not end in a flood of tears and a taxi'

The secret of age? Lie about it

LIFE AND SOUL



JANE SHILLING

One of the small consolations of parenthood, I think, is the prospect that, with advancing age, one may eventually find oneself in a position to give one's children a little demonstration of what it was like when they were small — living with someone fretful, capricious, requiring constant entertainment and continual vigilance. In many ways, I am quite looking forward to my dotage. The role of formidable old woman is one, it strikes me, from which I might derive considerable amusement.

The only thing is, I hadn't planned to begin quite yet. At the moment, my inner sergeant-major still has the upper hand, and I like bossing everyone else around. But Alexander, I suspect, has other ideas. I detect in him a certain exasperation with my vagueness. He has become tiresomely vigilant about driving ("Mum, if a policeman sees you doing that, will you go to prison?") and, since I locked us out the other day, the front door keys ("would you like me to look after them for you?").

I think he would probably date my decline from the day we went to see his new piano teacher. My sister and I had legs too short to reach the pedals when we began our years of compulsory music lessons, and it is amazing how effective the Jesuitical catch 'em young approach has proved to be.

Almost equally devoid of musical talent (the sound of my sister whacking merry hell out of *Für Elise*), we nevertheless grew up rather musically inclined — my sister to a corporate box at the opera, me to an ancient Broadwood piano.

It is a pretty little instrument, bought for its looks and midget size rather than its tone (it is wooden framed and sounds terrible, even when just tuned. We dropped baby Jesus inside it on Christmas Eve, which hasn't helped). From time to time I hear Alexander strumming quietly on it, singing to himself.

Now, I lead a rich imaginative life, so in no time at all I have parlayed this artless plinking into a choral scholarship somewhere with an ancient cloister. Then again, the choir school prospectuses that I have seen require a dauntingly high level of musical accomplishment from children only a tiny bit older than Alexander. Time for me to act. So I made an appointment at the local conservatoire and we arrived to find a competent-looking lady in a tweed skirt administering a bracing telling off to a child who had not done his theory homework. "And how old is Alexander?" said the competent lady. Five and a half, said I, alertly. We chatted for a bit, and I felt that I was doing rather well at being keen but not pushy, when there came a little pause in the conversation. "Actually," said Alexander, leaning forward confidentially, "my mummy has made a mistake. I am not five and a half, I'm six and a half." Oh, thanks a lot, Alexander. Ha ha ha, silly me . . .

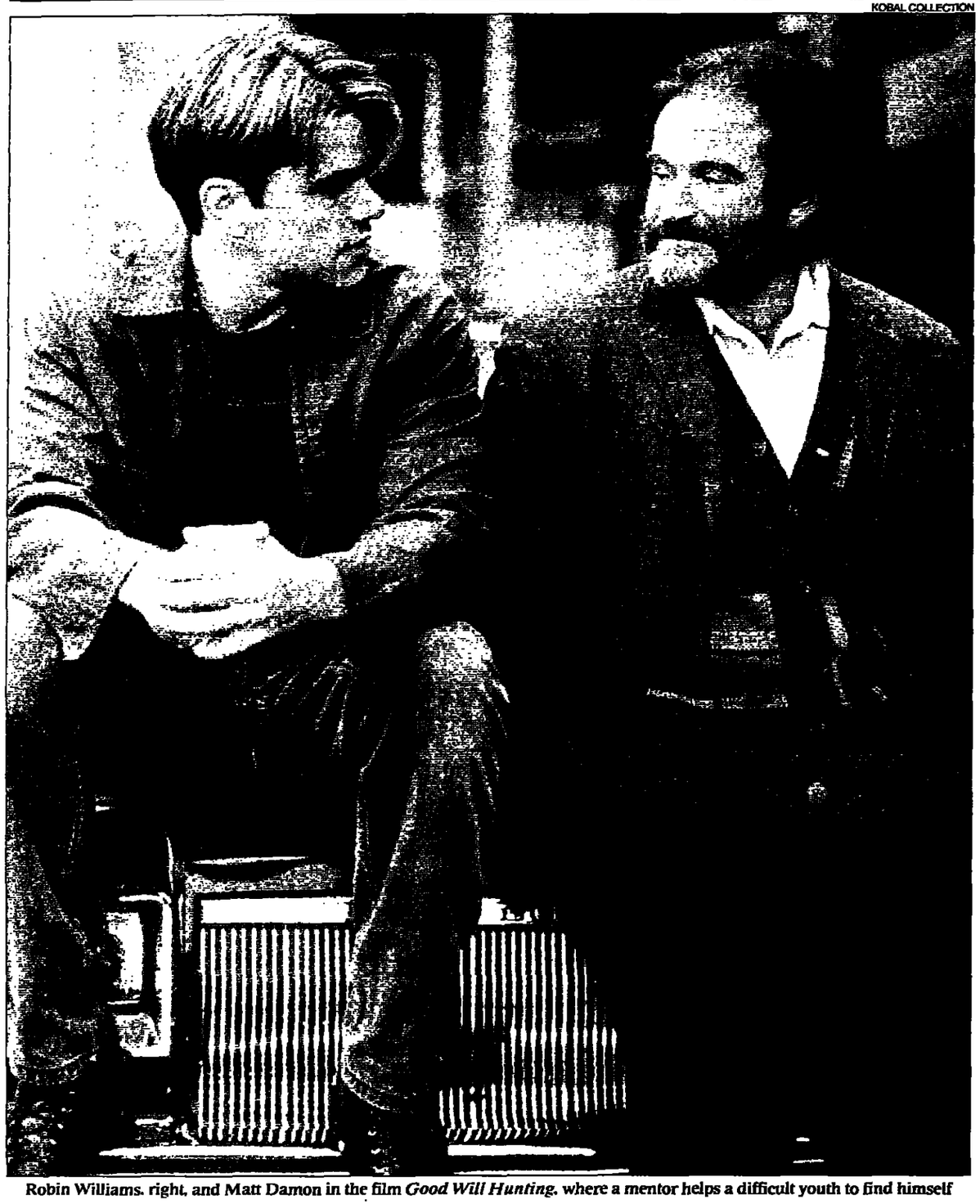
It was no good. I was out of the conversation. Between them they arranged that he should begin lessons at the end of April, with regular practice at home, which I shall be required to attend. Then Alexander climbed down off his chair and escorted me back to the car. Nothing was said, but I can see that one more slip like that and the prospectuses of twilight homes for distressed gentlefolk will be appearing next to the choir school prospectuses.

But look here. I've had a lot on my mind. With another horrid birthday looming, what more natural than that I should start lopping years off our ages? My birthdays are always dreadful, echoing to Barbara Skelton's resentful cry of "insufficient fuss made". I tell no one about them, and then am mortified to wake on the day and find the street not thronged with a camel caravan bearing all the treasures of Araby.

This year, at least, I have taken steps. Alexander put his pocket money on Cambridge to win the boat race and won a tenner, some of which he will be spending, if he is wise, on a lovely present for his mummy. And in the nick of time I have made my peace with Charles, who has promised to take me out to dinner. So the only thing that can go wrong is my frock. I have bought one for the occasion. It is extremely fashionable, crocheted, in a sort of seaweedy green.

It occurs to me that, looked at through the eyes of someone more used, as Charles is, to a landscape of spinney and stream than Harvey Nicks couture floors, it might rather resemble a landing net. In fact, if you ran a wire around its hem and put a handle on it, it would *be* a landing net. I was thinking of wearing it with an Anna Molinari cardigan and gilt Manolo Blahnik mules. I hope my appearance does not inspire Charles to satire. I hope that this birthday, which propels me a year closer to my imminent dotage, does not end in a flood of tears and a taxi. We shall see.

KOBAL COLLECTION



Robin Williams, right, and Matt Damon in the film *Good Will Hunting*, where a mentor helps a difficult youth to find himself

MENTORS



Barnados boy, George Cole, left, was taken on by the actor Alistair Sim and his wife, Naomi, at 14



Aged 20, Prince Charles took up with explorer and mystic Sir Laurens van der Post



Gertrude Stein, left, was mentor to the Paris avant-garde set, including lover Alice B. Toklas

Good will shining through

Wayward teenagers in Nottingham are flourishing in a newly introduced mentor programme, writes **James Rampton**

A youngster from a disadvantaged background has made it his life's work to rebel against authority. After years of problems, he is finally obliged to see the error of his ways and realise his potential through the tender loving care of a compassionate adult role model.

It's the synopsis of a hundred Hollywood movies, including the most recent Oscar-winner *Good Will Hunting*, the story of a working-class Boston boy in trouble with the law, made good by the efforts of a charismatic college professor played by Robin Williams. It's also a real-life situation I witnessed last week not in Massachusetts, but in Nottingham.

Marcus, is a 14-year-old with a history of bullying. He is one of 15 youths who has embarked on a new scheme set up by the Divert Trust following the success of similar mentoring schemes in America, where a responsible adult is assigned to a potentially wayward child to give advice and support on a regular basis.

Huddled in a green anorak several sizes too big for him, Marcus sat quietly in a school room and patiently explained to me how the programme has helped him. "It gives you more chance to do your school work because it helps you to stay away from certain people. My mentor and I make deals with each other. She will do something exciting with me if I avoid the people who get me into trouble."

Looking down at his shoes with touching diffidence, he continued: "My behaviour has improved. I concentrate better and don't argue back as much. I'd recommend it to my friends."

Dee Clark is a community social worker who has volunteered to give up several hours a week of her spare time to be Marcus's mentor. She has weekly meetings with him in a local community centre and helps out with educational trips to places such as Cambridge, Liverpool and North Wales.

MICHAEL POWELL



Dee Clark, a mentor to difficult youngsters in Nottingham

Together they read instructive stories such as *Gifted Hands* — "It's about a black youth who is told he can't do anything later in life. He goes on to become a great doctor," she says. Ms Clark has also worked hard to encourage Marcus's interest in athletics. She has just taken him to the local sports stadium and set him up with a javelin coach.

In assessing her role, she reckons: "It's not just having a chat. It's educative and productive. He doesn't hold back with me. He can talk to me about how he's cheesed off with his family, and I can say, 'Have you ever looked at it this way?' Self-esteem is vital. If someone else sees you as important, then it's much easier to see yourself in that way."

Paul Grant, the co-ordinator of the Nottingham project, chimes in: "Marcus still has his problems at school, but I've seen a lot of improvement in terms of his attitude. Another youth in our group is back in school having avoided permanent exclusion, and his mother was very grateful to us. Our mentees like the opportunity to talk to an adult who's not in a position of authority. They often need an adult from outside their immediate family to show them the ropes.

"Also, seeing someone from their community doing well in their career can be helpful. There's an old African saying: 'It takes a whole village to raise a single child.' "

Influential figures are now latching on to mentoring. The Prince of Wales, whose Prince's Trust is setting up several programmes in the field, recently wrote in the *Big Issue* that "we have learnt much about the benefits of giving young people adult 'mentors' or personal advisers to help them to find jobs or develop their skills."

Prime Minister Tony Blair, Education Secretary David Blunkett and Home Office Minister Alun Michael have all praised mentoring. And Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, spoke last week at a conference on "Motivating young people through social mentoring".

The statistics on mentoring programmes in the US seem to present an encouraging picture. Big Brother and Big Sister schemes have boomed over the past ten years, with projects focusing on the black and Hispanic communities and youngsters who are HIV-positive. A 1996 academic study by Tierney and Baldwin Grossman concluded that, compared with similar young people not on the programme, mentees were 46 per cent less likely to start using illegal drugs, 27 per cent less likely to start drinking and 52 per cent less likely to skip a day of school.

Here, recent evaluation of a mentoring project in inner London which works with 15 to 19-year-olds who have been permanently excluded from school found that, since the scheme went into operation a year ago, the group's arrest rate has fallen by 60 per cent.

Kate Phipps, national mentoring development officer of the Divert Trust, admits that official enthusiasm for her sort of scheme is at least partially motivated by economic concerns. "The financial costs of youth crime are high — an Audit Commission report suggests a sum of £2 billion a year — but the social costs are far higher.

"We have a whole generation feeling alienated. They've been told society is about achieving, and if they're not, they feel excluded," she says.

However, there are still those who feel that mentoring is the sort of job that should be kept within families. You don't need outside agencies meddling in the upbringing of your children, they say.

Ms Phipps responds: "In an ideal world, families would look after these children, but the family network is breaking down, and we've got to find other ways to help."

Ms Clark stresses: "We are very careful not to make the mentees feel that we're better than their parents. We have a different role from the parents. It's more like an aunt or a big sister." In turn, the parents of the children on the Nottingham programme seem very supportive of the mentors (who are all carefully checked out by the police and given two days' intensive training).

Although embryonic in this country and risking accusations of trendiness, mentoring does appear to have a positive function. If it turns just one child away from a life of crime, doesn't that make it worthwhile?

"Of course there will always be cynicism and it's unrealistic to think that mentoring will cure all the social problems around," Ms Phipps concludes. "But these are children, and every child deserves an opportunity."

Just ask Marcus.

A case of death by chocolate

For some it's a not-so-sweet Easter, says **Dr Thomas Stuttaford**

Camilla Spence of Wallingford in Oxfordshire will be spending Easter rather differently from many of her school friends. Wallingford is deep in Thelwell country and no sooner will many of her companions have made a hog of themselves with their chocolate eggs than they are out with their ponies.

Camilla suffers from allergies to a wide variety of substances ranging from animal fur to nuts. If Camilla so much as smells an egg, as when her mother is whisking a cake mix, she becomes covered in urticarial weals — red and white and raised like some painful nettle rash. Nuts, eggs or dairy produce can bring on anaphylactic shock, a complete and dangerous collapse. Camilla's parents wisely carry an Epipen, an injecting device, so that life-saving adrenalin can be given immediately.

Camilla is even unable to join an Easter egg hunt as merely touching the dyed booty might induce a fearsome reaction. In the Spence household there can be no Dobbin to groom in the stables, no jolly dog to beg for bits of chocolate, nor even a cat to lap up forbidden milk. Camilla's love of animals has to be satisfied by a hamster, one better, as her mother says, than a virtual reality pet.

Camilla doesn't count herself unlucky as she says that it's impossible to miss what you have never had. She will, however, miss chocolate this Easter for unlike some children she is not allergic to cocoa. But unfortunately her local shop no longer stocks the dark chocolate which contains no dairy produce. She could try Caley's marching chocolate which is 70 per cent cocoa butter and has no milk; it sustained the troops for nearly 50 years and is still made by a small firm in Norwich.

> Diabetics should not worry over sugar, but have a good mixed diet

Christopher Sims of Chichester won't be on the Easter egg trail either. Seventeen is probably growing rather too old for such jollities but he's never been able to join in. His list of allergies is even greater than Camilla's. Fruits, vegetables, chicken and pork, beans, eggs, and all milk and dairy produce.

Easter eggs were absolutely out when he was younger but his mother, Jill, wrapped fruit pastilles in silver paper twisted into egg-shaped parcels which he could search for, and later while his sister unwrapped and munched a large Easter egg he chewed his pastilles and explored his latest box of Lego.

For Christopher, problems with Easter allergies started on Good Friday as he is allergic to the eggs and butter in hot cross buns. The Sims family learnt early how to compensate Christopher for any difficulties created by the allergies, and made certain that other treats could be devised to make up for anything from which he was excluded.

Other children will be forbidden sweets and chocolates next weekend because they are diabetic. The parents' strictness wins little support from the British Diabetic Association, however. Doctors looking after diabetics now decry the special products made for their patients which usually have no fewer calories than standard food, merely less sugar. Received wisdom is that diabetic patients should not worry too much about the sugar content but have a good mixed diet with plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, peas and beans and starchy polysaccharides — but not too much fat.

Diabetic members of the family can enjoy in moderation the same Easter eggs, preferably made of dark chocolate, as everybody else.

HULTON GETTY



Tasty, but some foods can be fatal if allergies aren't spotted early

EGGS WITH A DIFFERENCE

Finding just one Easter egg for a child with a food intolerance or is vegetarian can be difficult. The following stockists offer a variety but do read the label before buying your chocolate eggs.

■ D & D Specialist Chocolates, Loughborough LE11 3HT (01509 216400). Prices from £1.99 excl p&p. Dairy free or carob.

■ Caley's of Norwich, Norwich (01603 488355). Caley's marching chocolate, 99p. Tesco and Selfridges.

■ Harrods, London SW1 (0171-730 1234). Nougat de Montélimar egg, £4.25.

■ Green & Blacks, London W11 (0171-243 0562). Organic chocolate eggs, 39p each.

■ Thorntons (0800 454537 for stockists). Vegetarians. Mini cappuccino egg, 39p. Viennese continental egg, £6.99.

PORTIA COLWELL

Single women are leaving the men a long way behind when it comes to house-buying. **Rachel Kelly** reports

The man of the house isn't here



GILL ALLEN

Single women are increasingly confident about DIY. Diane Bate plans to refit the kitchen herself at her house in Battersea

Sisters, it seems, are buying it for themselves. New figures show that the fastest-growing group of homeowners in Britain is single working women.

Last year, 17 per cent of mortgages were taken out by women — double the percentage for 1983, according to a recent Barclay's Bank survey.

A new regiment of women are buying and Kate Denton is one of them. This 30-year-old business and training consultant combines a successful career with a contented single life in her Kentish Town, north London, flat which she recently bought with a £140,000 mortgage. "Women are much happier and more prepared to be on their own now. A lot of women are saying 'Yes, I can live by myself'."

Helen Moore, 36, a secretary from Prestatyn, agrees: "Years ago, you had to get a man, and you had to get married before you bought a house — that was the norm. Women are getting much more independent nowadays. I wanted something that was modernised and didn't need too much work. Men are more interested in where they can put their stereo than how somewhere looks."

So what does a woman buyer look for in a property? Much the same as a single man, according to Paul Vallone, group sales and marketing director for Berkeley Homes. "Obviously security is an issue. Ultimately though, they just want to be close to the heart of things," he says.

Sara Harman, 25, moves into her new one-bedroom flat in southwest London next week. She took out a £65,000 mortgage, and pays just under £400 a month. "It is secure because it's on the first floor, but I'm not a scared kind of woman anyway. I've done a lot of travelling so I can look after myself."

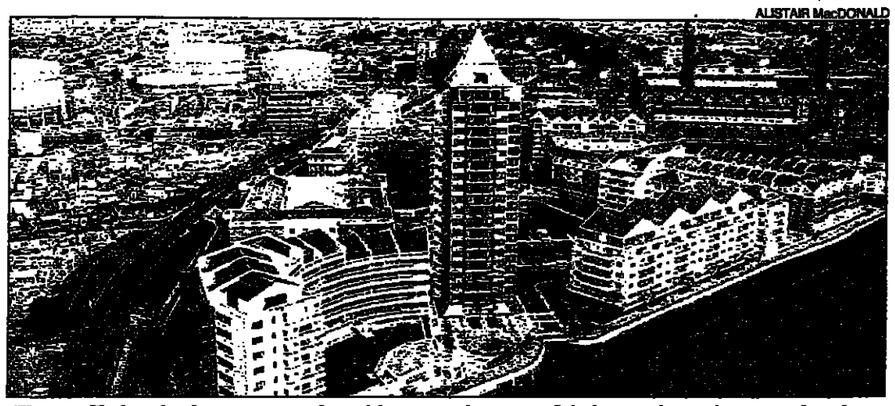
Most important to her was its proximity to nightlife and the Tube line that will get her there. These are not, perhaps, the priorities for a family but they are not so different to those of your average single man. "I see my flat as a little bachelorette pad that I can enjoy myself in," she says.

A sense of style is what sets women apart, according to Tessa Tennant, 45, who runs her own hot-air balloon company, and chose her Chelsea harbour flat for its view of the river.

"Aesthetics are much more important to a woman. I like different rooms for different moods. I want to see the sun go down over the river or see the hustle and bustle of the marina."

Diane Bate, 24, a business analyst, may not agree. "Of course I wanted to live somewhere pretty, but, in the end, my place looks almost identical to my brother's," she says of her one-bedroom house in Battersea, southwest London.

ALISTAIR MacDONALD



Flats at Chelsea harbour are popular with women because of their security and spectacular views

One stereotype does seem to ring true. "I don't want to sound sexist, but women do tend to want a bit more kitchen space," says Patrick Glynn-Jones, from FPD Savills estate agency in west Kensington.

Lots of cupboard space and a garden are also priorities for single women, according to Heather Pontifax from the same firm. "Women like sunbathing, gardening and organising parties," she says.

And they are keen to make it a place they can call home. DIY has become a pastime as much for a woman as any man. Gallup estimates that, while two-thirds of householders tackle DIY, 45 per cent of those are women.

Charlotte Hickson, 24, a PR consultant, doesn't mind getting her hands dirty. "Men aren't as concerned with the potential of doing somewhere up. I've repainted the whole place, ripped up the carpets and sanded down the floorboards myself."

Miss Bate plans to refit the kitchen herself and to lay a pine floor. "I want to try it myself because it's cheaper — and Ikea says it's easy."

Nor is there any truth in the stereotype of a financially unsophisticated dizzy blonde who doesn't know her mortgage from her endowment policy.

Finance-wise, women are as astute as men and, if anything, more reliable, says Sue Anderson, from the Building Society Association. She denies that women lack financial literacy. "If it was ever true, it was probably only because they didn't have the same economic power as men, or the same access to mortgages," she says. "If you look at the figures, women are better at handling their finances than men when buying property."

Even though they tend to pay a greater proportion of their income towards a mortgage, women are less likely to default on their payments. In 1996, 18 per cent of male mortgage holders had difficulty keeping up mortgage payments, compared with 11 per cent of female holders. Yet well into the 1960s it was common practice for women to need a male guarantor before they could get a mortgage.

Miss Bate, who took out a £95,000 mortgage last year, says: "The finance side was fine. Like anyone, my male friends included, if it's your first mortgage, it can be a bit confusing, but I just went through my bank."

A "career mortgage" was the answer for Miss Moore, a second-time buyer, who borrowed £65,000 from the Halifax eight years ago. Repayments are spread over 40 years, which she thinks is more suitable for single people, building a home on one income.

For Miss Hickson, taking a £35,000 mortgage for a house in Sydenham, south London, has been a positive step. "I can never understand why people who are paying extortionate rent say they can't afford a mortgage. And anyway, sharing a flat will never give you this much independence."

Bridget Jones would be proud.

● *Additional research by Helen Castell.*

SMART MOVES



THE Vineyard, Hurlingham Road, London SW6, once home to newspaper proprietor **Lord Beaverbrook** (above) has been sold for close to £5 million. Kirsty Smallwood, Lord Beaverbrook's granddaughter, who inherited the house in 1970, will be moving to the country.

The property, which dates to 1680, was originally a farmhouse and the kitchen was once a pigsty and cowshed. The house was extended in the 18th century, and again in 1920, shortly after Lord Beaverbrook bought it.

CHAIRMAN of the Arts Council and Granada boss **Gerry Robinson** has sold his £8 million house in Addison Road, Kensington, London W8, through agents John D. Wood. The new buyers are an English family. He is thought to be looking to move closer to the centre of town.



SINGER **Madonna** (above) is still looking to buy in London. The star was spotted inspecting a converted church in St John's Wood, north London, through agents Bargets. All the firm will confirm is that "the old church" on Carlton Street, NW8, has been viewed "by various people in the film and music business".

RACHEL KELLY

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*All sales offices and showhouses are open daily from 10.00am to 6.00pm

Prices and availability correct at time of going to press.

Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier fell in love here, teenage lovers eloped and ghosts roam the grounds. **Alex O'Connell** discovers a romantic hideaway



Rear view of the rustic 14th-century Woodlands Manor in Mere, Wiltshire, which is on sale at £1.2 million

DES JENSON



The manor where love is in the air

HOUSE OF THE WEEK



A roaring fire in the inglenook (left) warms the Great Hall (right). With its high ceiling and fine exposed beams, it is a fitting location for the ghost of a priest throwing his chalices around who haunts the house

Consider popular venues for illicit affairs and you might think of the back seats of his car, a service-station café or the pebble-dashed walls and woodchipped intestines of the suburban semi.

In fact, some of the most important and salubrious love-ins in British history happened within the thick stone walls of the five bedroom, 14th-century Woodlands Manor in the sleepy county of Wiltshire, the sort of Tudor pile that I thought only existed on laminated placemats and English Heritage tankards.

Adrian Parnwell, who has been living at Woodlands since 1963 with his family, is selling reluctantly but necessarily — his mother is retiring back to South Africa. The family moved to England from Johannesburg in 1963. He assures me that £1.2 million is a fair price for the manor, a converted coachhouse and 12 acres of land, but admits that it is not just the house that has to appeal to its new owners: they must also buy into its history.

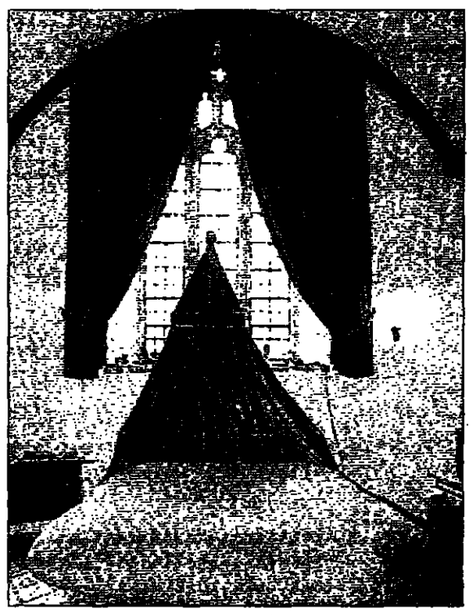
Originally a chapel, the east range of the house was added during the 15th century. The property underwent further internal modifications during the 16th and 18th centuries, and was finally brought back to its original condition this century. But whether the viewer is lounging around in the Great Hall or peering down from the Ladies' Reclining Area, it is the speculations about who kissed whom and where that haunt the linen-fold panelling, the embellished plastered ceiling and the Jacobean staircase.

Elyard, a British historian who spent time documenting the great houses of England, refers to Woodlands as "one of the quaintest old-world dwellings in Wiltshire and, indeed, one that can hardly be matched elsewhere". With its large inglenooks, exposed beams and surrounding fields of daffodils, he has a point.

In 1756, Thomas Pitt, the Earl of Londonderry, bought the manor and passed it on to his daughter Lucy. But Lady Lucy was no blue-stocking and Woodlands became the backdrop to one of the most important affairs in constitutional history. At 13, this racy girl ran away from home to marry her lover, Pierce Meyrick, a decision which persuaded Parliament to pass the Marriage Act for the prevention of marriage between young people without consent.

Although forcibly parted, Lucy and Pierce were remarried some years later and spent a blissfully content part of their lives at Woodlands.

If that sounds like the script worthy of a "straight-to-video" movie, then it will come as no surprise to learn that much later the site attracted two of Britain's most famous film stars. In 1942, Woodlands was snapped up by Leigh Holman, then married to Vivien Leigh of *Gone with the Wind* fame. Their daughter, Suzanne, still lives in the village. The couple loved the house and, stepping on to the bedroom balcony with its view out to the moat, it is easy to see why.





TOPHAM

The old chapel has been turned into a bedroom with a balcony overlooking the moat (above)

Vivien Leigh and her first husband Leigh Holman with their daughter Suzanne (right). The couple lived at Woodlands, where her lover Laurence Olivier visited them

Holman took pride in the restoration of Woodlands and, in 1948, built a new "solar wing". But a few years before he started his grand project the couple's relationship was starting to crumble. Mr Parnwell says that during this time Leigh's soon-to-be second husband — Laurence Olivier — was a frequent visitor.

The couple finally divorced in 1947 and Leigh went on to marry Olivier almost immediately.

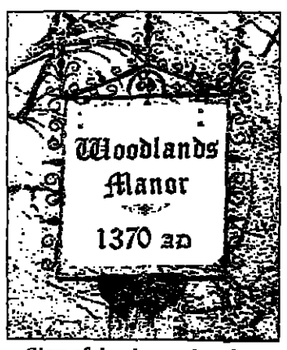
Star-studded *menages à trois* and the subjects of teenage lust are not the only ghosts to skip around the manor. A crinolene-clad lady has been seen in the grounds singing *Clementine* — persuasively enough for the local newsagent to insist that its boys deliver at an alternative entrance.

A South African psychic, who visited recently to check out the house's karma, spotted a priest in the hall throwing down his chalices into the Great Hall. Later, passes with a metal detector in the area inspired a succession of bleeps and squeaks.

If that doesn't have you shaking in your boots, then a glance at the chiselled inscriptions on the door of the lock-in cupboard — a popular venue for naughty servants — will.

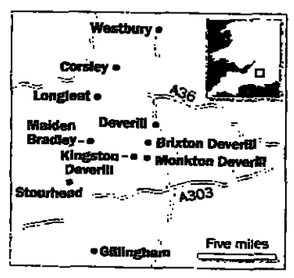
But such macabre details should not deter. It is a friendly house and any ghosts "are kind spirits", Mr Parnwell is quick to assure.

● *Agent: Savills, 0171-499 8644.*



Sign of the times, showing the manor's early beginnings

MARKET COMMENT



SOUTHERN Wiltshire has inherited a wealth of manor houses, vicarages, rectories, dower houses and hunting lodges — not to mention estates such as Longleat and Stourhead. They span a broad age range, from Elizabethan to Victorian, and many are handsome, well-proportioned Georgian spin-offs from Salisbury Plain's lucrative wool trade in the 18th century. This was a period when garden and parkland planning was fashionable, so fine grounds are often part of the package.

Because the area remains relatively underdeveloped — without a lot of industrial or housing activity or an elaborate motorway network — many small estates have managed to remain intact and it is feasible to pick up anything between ten and 30 acres with your country pile.

But south Wiltshire is not remote in practical terms. The main artery is the dual-carriageway A303 which links with central London in a couple of hours, while trains run regularly on the main southwestern mainline from Westbury to Paddington (75 minutes), or from Gillingham to Waterloo (an hour and 45 minutes). As a consequence, says Andrew Cronan of Savills' Bath office, the majority of buyers in the past few years have been Londoners easing out of the rat-race.

"The fact that the A303 is the only road and it is not a congested area are real attractions for people who are looking for a rural existence within a proper farming community," Mr Cronan says.

The other attraction of relative isolation is that property represents good value for money compared with further east or nearer the motorway links. A seven-bedroom manor house with ten acres would start at about £700,000, while a Georgian rectory with four or five bedrooms and several acres fetches upwards of £500,000. But even £300,000 would buy a quality period four-bedroom house, with an acre or two. Popular villages include Corsley, Maiden Bradley and the Deverills.

Mr Cronan estimates that prices over the past 18 months have risen by about 15-20 per cent. "There is a chronic shortage of supply and the market is being drip-fed good houses at the moment," he says.

FAITH GLASGOW

HOME SWAP

THE GEORGIAN gems in Bow, east London, are highly sought-after, priced up to £250,000 for a three-bedroom house on Tredegar Square, a short stroll from Mile End underground station. Demand for properties north of the Bow Road is such that few remain on the market for long, despite price rises of up to 37 per cent last year. Smart shops, wine bars and antique shops are opening and City buyers are moving in, says estate agent Winkworth. Investors are mopping up former local authority flats from £40,000; a two-bedroom conversion flat costs from £80,000; a three-bedroom Victorian house from £175,000.

Relocating executives and English retirees are buying homes around Dingwall, a small town within commuting distance of Inverness, northeast Scotland. Property prices in this part of the Scottish Highlands are among the lowest in Britain. For £45,000 you can buy a new two-bedroom semi-detached bungalow in a good location. About £100,000 buys a six-bedroom period house; around Edinburgh the same house might fetch £200,000, according to GA Property Services.

The area around Diss, on the Norfolk/Suffolk border, is good value. Just 90 minutes by fast train from Liverpool Street, you can buy a terraced two-bedroom Victorian house for £39,000. Pretty period cottages for renovation cost from £25,000 to £45,000. Detached cottages in good condition, with up to three bedrooms, range from £80,000 to £100,000, through Diss estate agents Durrants and Gaze & Son.



This two-bedroom Victorian terraced cottage with a rear patio garden in Blondin Street, Bow, London E3, is for sale at £110,000 (Winkworth, 0181-981 6776).



For even less you can buy this attractive three-bedroom 19th-century detached town house with a small garden in Eye, Suffolk, five miles from Diss (Gaze & Son, 01379 641341).



In the Scottish Highlands, a similar sum will buy this traditional stone-built house with six bedrooms and four reception rooms, on the outskirts of Dingwall, Ross-shire. It comes with a large garden and views towards the Cromarty Firth and the Black Isle (GA Property Services, 01349-864848).

CHERYL TAYLOR

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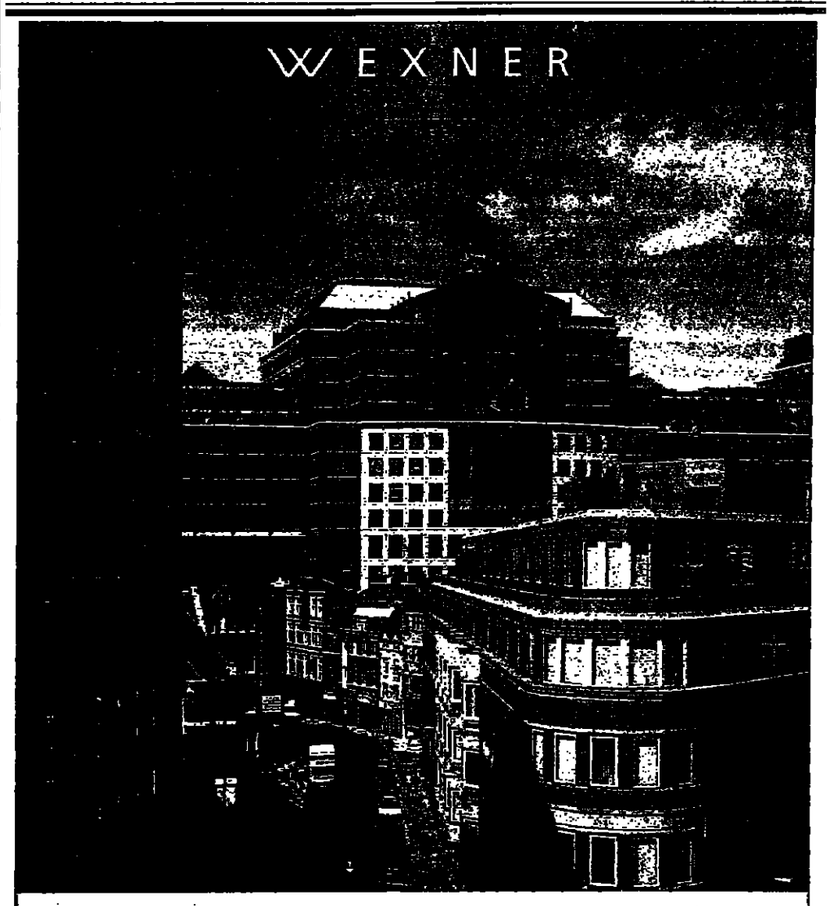
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When the rural idyll goes wrong

Living in the country is no bed of roses if you can't get to the shops or doctor, says Faith Glasgow



The handsome Victorian rectory in Devon which the Gibbs are having to sell



APEX

Alan and Jessica Gibbs have decided that better local facilities are now a priority

The lack of amenities in villages across Britain tends to have more impact on the less vociferous members of country communities — particularly the elderly — than on the hunting, shooting and fishing brigades.

The Countryside march did much to highlight the fate of fox-hunting but little to help the plight of rural services. As the Rural Development Commission's 1997 Survey of Rural Services makes abundantly clear, a large proportion of England's ten million-strong rural population has no local access to basic services such as village shops or post offices.

Of the 9,000 parishes surveyed, 70 per cent lacked a general store, 43 per cent were without a post office, and 91 per cent were without a bank or building society. Worse still, the survey highlighted the continuing reduction in bus services — 75 per cent had no daily buses or community transport scheme.

So what happens to country dwellers who lose their mobility? Alan Gibbs, 74, a retired but sprightly teacher, lost his driving licence last August after taking the compulsory DVLA three-yearly sight test. He failed because he had glaucoma (despite the fact that his ophthalmologist confirmed that his eyes had not deteriorated for 15 years) and, although he is determinedly seeking a second opinion, he knows it is more than likely that his days behind the wheel are over.

Since then, life at the handsome Victorian rectory in Farway, a village four miles from Honiton in Devon where he retired in 1982, has become increasingly awkward. There is no shop and no public transport of any sort, "except for an erratic market bus on Tuesdays", and he is entirely dependent on his wife — herself an uneasy driver, who feels the strain.

In the end, and reluctantly, they have decided to sell the house where they thought they'd end their days. "I love living here, I love the valley and the village," says Mr Gibbs. "I don't want to be a townie. I want to be able to get out into the fields." Nonetheless, amenities now have to be a priority: they will move to a small new development in Cirencester, nearer their children. "It's half a mile to Waitrose and the library and less than half a mile to walk among the fields."

He admits, however, that the loss of mobility, though a great nuisance, has to some extent acted as a catalyst. A move to a smaller and better-situated house might well have assumed more urgency as they got older.

Simon Gordon Duff, of Knight Frank in Stratford-upon-Avon, has been dealing with a couple with similar foresight. They live "out in the sticks of Warwickshire", several miles from the nearest village of Kineton, and are waiting only to find a suitable property in Stratford or somewhere similar before they sell their house. He says: "They want to be within walking distance of shops and facilities. They're still pretty mobile, but they rely on a car and they are looking ahead."

> 'Supermarkets have done more damage to rural life than BSE by crippling local shops and penalising those without cars'

Sisters Gladys Miller and Betty Chadwick were in a similar position when they decided to move from Dunkeld in Scotland to Chorleywood in Hertfordshire. Although Dunkeld had some facilities, says Mrs Miller, "it wasn't enough to inspire you to shop. We had to drive 15 miles to Perth each week to shop properly". They have bought adjoining homes in a retirement village for the over-sixties, where a shop, surgery, library and restaurant are all on-site. "We haven't got the mountains and lochs, but we have lovely trees and pubs and everything we need nearby," she says.

The car has, of course, long been a way of life in the country: if people don't have a village shop they drive a few miles for bits and pieces; and even if they do, few are beyond the influence of the supermarket chains for major shopping trips.

Tom Quinn, Editor of *The Countryman* magazine, says: "In some respects, Tesco and Sainsbury have done more damage to the fabric of rural society than BSE and intensive farming practices put together, because they cripple local shops, and that penalises those without cars."

James Wilson, of the property search firm Lane Fox Acquisitions, suggests that rural infrastructure is a secondary consideration for buyers moving or "semi-moving" out of town. "They won't be put off by lack of amenities. They're looking for a toehold in the country and finding the right house is the most important thing," he says.

But as they approach retirement and spend more time within the community, a process of "ruralisation" sets in and local facilities assume a new importance. "They start thinking about post offices, doctors, shops — a supportive environment. In a lot of cases they move from their relatively big and remote house to a smaller and more manageable one in a village with better services."

So what should buyers, particularly older ones, consider when taking a long-term view of their rural idyll? If it's a wholehearted move to the country, don't underestimate the value of basic amenities down the road.

As Jonathan Haward, of search agents County Homesearch in Truro, points out: "Probably 70 per cent of our clients want an edge-of-village situation: but we never have people saying they'd like to live on the edge of a village without a shop, post office and pub. The dream is to be able to walk up to a mile to pick up the paper."

This translates into a higher value for houses with public transport and amenities within easy striking distance. While it can be difficult to compare individual properties, John Husband at Humberts in Lewes, Sussex, puts an average premium of 10-25 per cent on those that are well-located.

Mr Haward compares two popular villages, both five miles from Truro. Perranwell Station has a pub, post office and shop (although the butcher closed two years ago), as well as a primary school and village hall. Devoran, a couple of miles away, is also well-served, except that it no longer has a shop.

A four-bedroom detached house in Perranwell has just been sold for £135,000, while a similar property in Devoran went for £117,000.

Apart from the convenience of being able to obtain day-to-day essentials without getting in the car, village shops — along with the pub, church primary school and village hall — constitute the mainstay of a much sought-after sense of community on the doorstep.

If you can combine all that with the house of your dreams, you are luckier than many countryside dwellers for whom rural life is an increasingly tough struggle.

● *The Old Rectory at Farway is on the market for £380,000 with Humberts in Honiton (01404 43456).*

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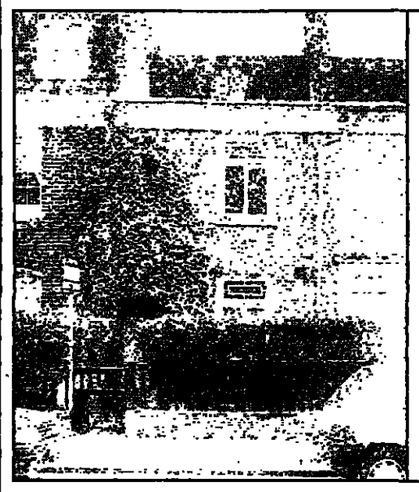
ABERDERE GARDENS, NW6. Freehold £895,000
In a conservation area and a quiet road, a Victorian house with many original features including parquet floors, fireplaces and cornicing. 6 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, shower room, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, 25.9 ha (85') garden.
ST JOHN'S WOOD OFFICE: 0171 722 5556



WEST SUSSEX – Crawley Down Price Guide: Excess of £1,000,000
Enjoying views over it's own land, an elegant Georgian house, Grade II listed, with a 2 bedroom cottage. 9 beds, 4 baths, shower rm, 4 receps, billiard rm, orangery, conservatory, offices, outbuildings, stable yard, garaging, tennis court. About 13.9 ha (34.5 acres) grounds.
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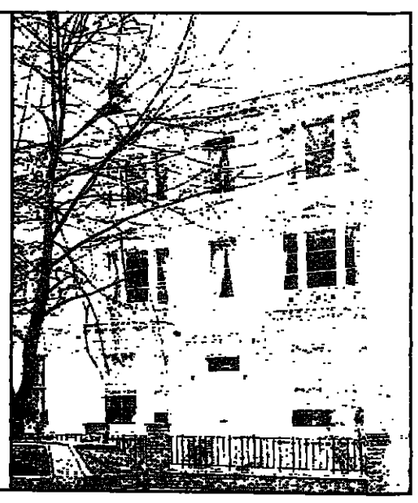


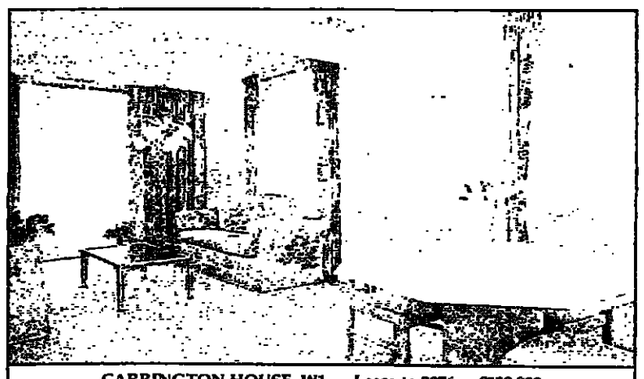
GLOUCESTERSHIRE – Uley Price Guide: £685,000
With views over the Cotswold escarpment, a well proportioned family house with an excellent range of outbuildings and stables. 6/8 beds, 4 baths, dressing rm, 3 reception rooms, utility, garage, grounds, haystore, 2 shelters, tack rm and 4 stables. About 6.6 acres
CIRENCESTER OFFICE: 01285 642244



BATTERSEA CHURCH ROAD, SW11.
A charming Victorian house needing complete modernisation; with the potential to extend behind and above, subject to consents. The house is close to local amenities, Battersea Park and Chelsea.
3 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, front and rear gardens.
Freehold
£275,000
BATTERSEA OFFICE: 0171 228 0174

BRUNSWICK GARDENS, W8.
A refurbished Victorian house, arranged over four floors and with a west-facing garden, in a quiet street on Campden Hill.
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A fine barn conversion with a heated swimming pool, a magnificent landscaped courtyard and gardens of about 1.3 acres. 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 reception rooms, hall, cloakroom, playroom/utility room, outbuildings, garaging plus stone barn with conversion potential.
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A most elegant first floor flat with a west-facing drawing room opening onto a balcony. Bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and large roof terrace.
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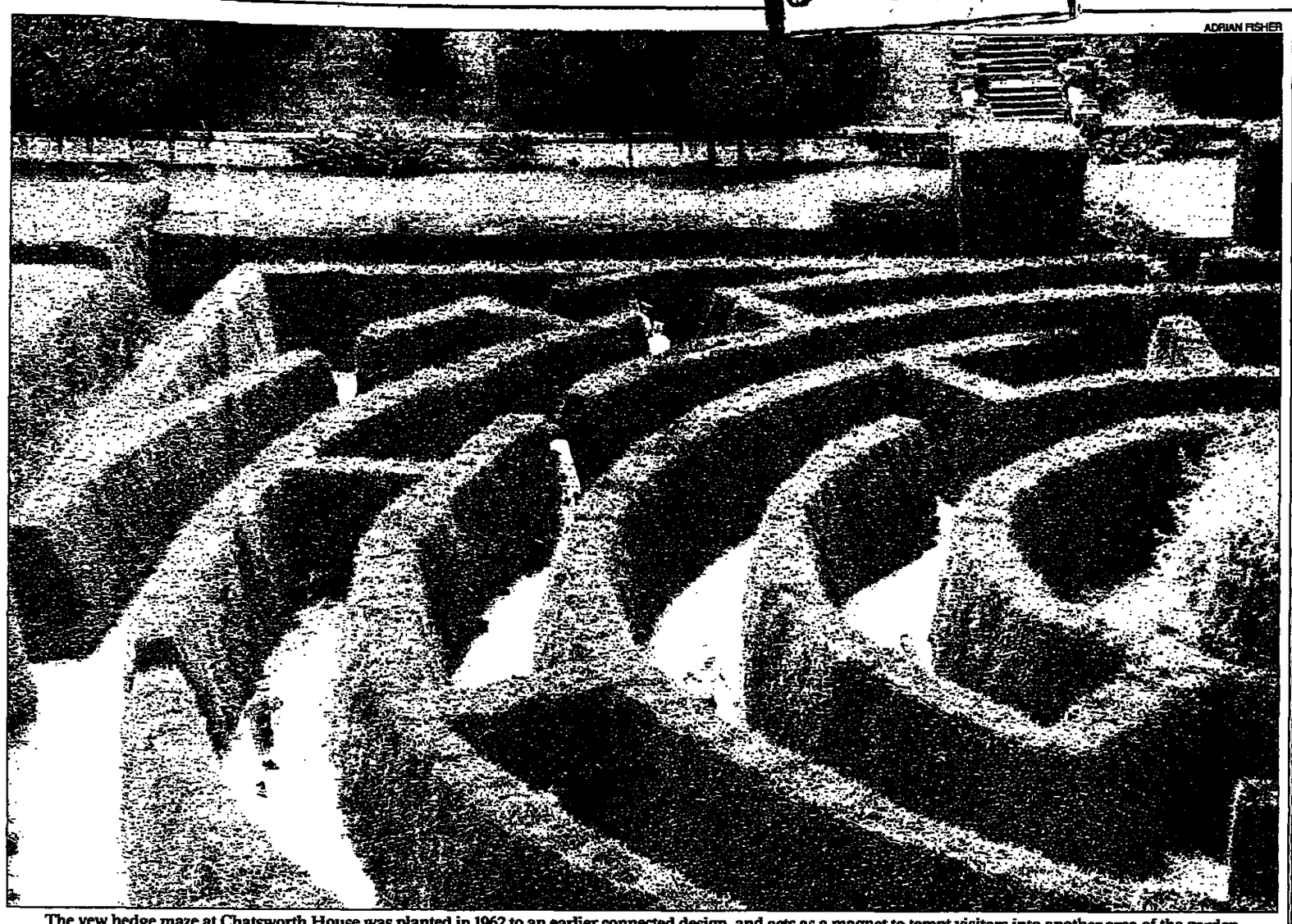
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ADRIAN FISHER



The yew hedge maze at Chatsworth House was planted in 1962 to an earlier connected design, and acts as a magnet to tempt visitors into another area of the garden

Gardening on a grand scale

Jane Owen launches the visiting season with a leisurely stroll through some of Britain's stately homes and landscaped gardens

The Easter holidays are traditionally the time when, flushed with spring and the failures in our own gardens, we start visiting other people's in earnest. It is a popular sport although not a new one: in the 18th century garden visiting, or rather visiting grand landscapes such as Stourhead and Studeley Royal, was all the rage.

In those days there were no formal openings and visitors tended to turn up unannounced. Sometimes enterprising estate workers and gardeners would take advantage and charge huge sums for a guided tour. At Chatsworth (see below) in the 19th century, for instance, the sixth Duke of Devonshire insisted that the waterworks be turned on whenever a visitor arrived. The waterworks, then and today, include the Emperor fountain, a cascade and a trick tree which showers innocent bystanders with water.

At the turn of the century, Sir Frank Crisp was one of the first to open his garden, Friar Park, regularly and formally. He did so for a charity linked to today's National Gardens Scheme. Sir Frank made an utterly mad and very well-planted garden in Oxfordshire.

Sadly, Friar Park is privately owned and is no longer open to the public. The four gardens I've picked to start *The Times* garden visiting season are respectable and important rather than eccentric, and they are open most of the time.

■ **Chatsworth, Derbyshire**
(01246 582204) 4 miles east of Bakewell. Open daily until October. 11am-5pm. £3.60.
THE DUCHESS of Devonshire's active interest in gardening keeps Chatsworth lively with a working kitchen garden, a large restored maze and other projects on top of the traditional features of fine beds, sculpture and well-stocked glasshouses. She is responsible for the odd privet, yew and ivy garden clipped and trained into the shapes of a four-poster bed, stairs, table and chairs. But the 100-acre garden and landscape is best known as a fine example of work by Capability Brown and Joseph Paxton. Mr Paxton was head gardener and largely responsible for the massive water works, including the 296ft water jet making the Emperor fountain. The earlier cascade, made in the 17th century by London and Wise, has been restored, as has their trick tree.





The Duchess of Devonshire's plant sculptures (left), and the stream and bog garden at Rosemoor

■ **Rosemoor, Great Torrington**
(01805 624067) 1 mile south east of Great Torrington. Open daily until September. 10am-6pm. £4.
A LARGE PART of RHS Rosemoor was created from a field on land given to the Society by Lady Anne Palmer along with her traditional garden and arboretum. The new garden is barely ten years old but it has the feel of an established garden.

The planting is excellent, the design is a mixture of awful and good. The group of Sorbus trees trained with simple black metal pillars into a cylinder-shaped, open-roofed gazebo makes an innovative and effective feature.

At this time of year the bog and stream garden between the new and old gardens is at its best and the dogwood collection is still strutting its brightly coloured bare branches. The path into the old garden dips through a tunnel under a road and emerges in front of a magnificent stone waterfall where ferns and mosses have established themselves.

GARDENS TO VISIT

■ **Dawyck Botanic Garden, Stobo**
(01721 760254) 8 miles south west of Peebles. Open daily until October. 9.30am-6pm. £3.
THIS IS PART of the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh and it is sited on a magnificent steep-sided valley of Scrape Burn with views across Perthshire. In the 19th century, Sir Murray Naesmyth landscaped the valley and added Italianate bridges, terraces and urns.

Most of the 60 acres is a fine arboretum which has been planted for 300 years with important trees being introduced from David Douglas's expeditions to northwest America. There are collections of birch, rowan, cotoneaster and berberis and a well-marked Scottish rare plant trail, including the white-flowered *Potentilla rupestris* or Rock Cinquefoil, which is found in only two places in Britain.

One of the garden's most original features is a cryptogamic sanctuary — a large area set aside for plants such as mosses, algae, lichens, fungi and ferns. The wildlife is good, too.

■ **Holehird Gardens, Cumbria**
(015394 46008) 1 mile north of Windermere. Entrance by donation. Open daily dawn to dusk.
HOLEHIRD'S 13 acres of acid soil in a well-wooded area on the eastern shore of Windermere gets low levels of sun, 70 inches of rain a year and high humidity — which is why *Gardening Which?* carries out some of its plant trials at Holehird. National collections of astilbes (the largest collection in the world), polystichum ferns and hydrangeas are held here. During this month and next the alpines (including those in the alpine house), the rhododendrons, spring flowering shrubs and narcissi will be at their best.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this garden, which is affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society, is that it is run by volunteers, many of them retired, and owned by the Lakeland Horticultural Society, which took over and restored Holehird in 1969.

A 60ft handkerchief tree is among the specimen trees, some of which survive from the original 19th-century plantings. A walled area, formerly a kitchen garden, gives enough shelter for tender plants such as carpenteria and diascia to thrive.

The LHS prides itself on its labelling system which it keeps up to date with engraved plastic labels. The garden is well maintained, each of the members of the society being a custodian of an area where they have autonomy within the society's democratically agreed masterplan. Views from the garden across the lake are particularly stunning.

STEPHEN ANDERTON'S GARDEN ANSWERS



RICHARD ALLEN



Q I save every scrap of raw fruit and vegetable waste for our compost bin, which produces excellent results. However, bearing in mind we have produce from all over the world, is there a risk, however slight, that in the long term I might in this way introduce soil-borne diseases, or even microscopic insect life? — A. Fox, Edgware, Middx.

A Global transport is always a small risk of introducing pests and diseases. When it comes to the introduction of new garden pests, there are various protections in place. First, plant importation, especially of plants with soil and roots attached, is governed by strict rules. Second, most crops imported from around the world are already heavily sprayed with pesticides to meet our legislative requirements. Third, most pests thrive best in their natural habitat and do not necessarily adapt to our climate.

That said, if any pest did arrive on a tropical plant it would be much more likely to crawl or fly off on to one of your houseplants than to multiply in the compost heap. The indoor climate would be so much more like home, and there are few predators. The risk of proliferation in a compost is small, especially in a well-made heap which heats to high temperatures. Go on composting.



Q We are planting a yew tree on our village green to mark the millennium. What size should we buy, and how do we care for it? The soil is clay. — E.J. Walker MBE, Waterlooville, Hants.

A Hooray! Yews may be poisonous but only to those animals or people who gorge on them. Plant one but fence it off if there are risks of it being eaten.

Yews are unfussy about soil as long as it is not waterlogged. For the millennium I would plant something 2-3ft tall, preferably bare-rooted rather than pot-grown.

Although yews seed themselves and survive in heavy shade, they do better in full sun, in well-prepared soil with compost or manure. Select a tree with a strong leader to be the trunk, and prune out any rival leaders. You can let all the side branches remain on the tree down to ground level. Only if you are planting close to a path will you need to lift the lower branches.

If there are other yews in gardens around the green, the chances are one of them will be male, so if you plant a female you will get those succulent red berries on your tree. To be certain of berries you need to plant a male and a female, and that means going to a nursery rather than a garden centre, where you should be offered sexed plants.

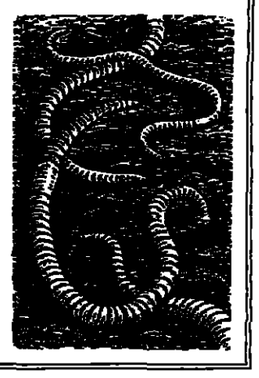
For something a bit more special, why not plant the spectacular yellow-berried female form *Fructu Luteo*. When it is covered with fruit it is fabulous to see. It is not listed in this year's edition of *The Plant Finder*, but someone must be growing it. If so, please let me know. I'll buy one too.

Q My garden soil is heavy and densely compacted. I have dug down 2-3ft to loosen it, and was thinking of scattering earthworms on it in an attempt to aerate it. Any advice please, and where do I get the worms? — S. Seaberg, Bury, Lancs.

A I admire you digging so deep, though I wonder how necessary it was to go quite so far down. Worms will stay only if there is organic matter in the soil to tempt them and feed them. Get hold of all the organic matter you can — old compost, manure, mushroom compost — and dig it in deeply. If the soil is clay, some coarse grit would also help to open up the soil. Then, if the worms do not appear of their own accord, buy some of the little red high-temperature worms for your compost heap, and bulk them up there before adding them to the soil.

You can also buy deep-burrowing earthworms for normal outdoor soil temperatures. Both are available from Wiggly Wigglers, Lower Blakemere, Herefordshire HR2 9PX (01981 500391).

● *Write to Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. Enclosures cannot be returned.*



Create heaven on earth with your own sacred garden, writes **Guy Ogilvy**

A partnership with nature

All gardens are sacred spaces, especially your own. So says Roni Jay, whose beautifully illustrated book *Sacred Gardens* not only explores the history and culture of gardens, but also shows us how we can incorporate sacred elements into our own gardens or even make our own Zen garden, knot garden, healing garden or one of seven traditional sacred gardens.

Talking to Roni in her walled garden in south Devon, I asked her what inspired the book. "We're sitting in it," she says. "It was moving down here and starting to restore this ancient garden that brought together my interests in history, spirituality and gardening. Moving from the city to the country you are aware of trying to find your own little slice of paradise, and when I learnt that the word 'paradise' is derived from the Persian for 'walled garden', I realised that gardens have always represented an attempt to recreate our idea of heaven on earth."



Healing spring flowing in Chalice Wells, Glastonbury

So can we see in gardens the spiritual values of a culture? "That's right. As with any art form, when you explore and analyse it, it informs us about the history and the cultural values of a people and their relationship with place. The Persians, for example, modelled their gardens on the description of paradise in the Koran, and they planted them with trees and flowers with symbolic spiritual values such as the rose, as described in the Koran. But the idea behind the most important feature of their gardens pre-dates Islam by centuries. Back to the Book of Genesis and the Garden of Eden."

The archetypal earthly paradise? "Exactly. The river that flowed out of the Garden of Eden is supposed to have split into four rivers, dividing the Earth into four. Four is the most holy number in Islam, symbolising order and symmetry, so they incorporated the idea into their gardens, using channels to represent rivers dividing the garden into four or multiples of four in larger gardens. Persia being a very dry country, they exalted water as the most important natural element, the giver of life, and in their gardens they made sure you were always within sight and sound of water."

Did other traditional cultures also have the garden as paradise idea? "Yes. The early Chinese. The Chinese Taoist conception of paradise was the Mystic Isles where the Immortals lived. There's the story of Emperor Wu who wanted to find the Mystic Isles so that he could ask the Immortals for the secret of eternal life. He searched the seas for years in vain and eventually decided to try to lure the Immortals to him by recreating the Mystic Isles as a garden. The Immortals never came but the traditional Chinese lake and island garden was established."

What about the West? Do we have a tradition of sacred gardens? "In the West we tend to have what we consider a more practical approach. Medieval healing gardens provided medicinal herbs, for example, but there was a kind of medieval garden called the Mary Garden, which honoured the Virgin Mary. This would be an enclosure within a larger walled garden, signifying the womb and the feminine principle and would be planted with trees and flowers symbolic of the beauty and purity of the Virgin, such as white roses and Madonna lilies."

Nowadays, Roni feels that spiritual values tend to be less conditioned by religion. "We all have our own sense of the sacred even if it's on the purely aesthetic level of being attracted to certain types of plant or style of garden. Everyone's garden is a unique expression. We work with what we've got, be it a window-box, a roof garden or a five-acre plot, in the way that suits us. Gardening is a creative and meditational exercise. By considering the sacred aspects of gardening, things like weeding can seem less like a chore and more an expression of creating space and harmony in our lives.

"Gardening is a partnership we make with nature. We have to work with her in order to be successful, but we are taking a creative role, working with what we have got and what is feasible. That's a metaphor for our own lives."

Anyone interested in any aspect of the sacred in gardening, be it cultural, historical or practical, will be entertained and informed by Roni's engaging book. Full of fascinating information, *Sacred Gardens* is a practical handbook. Seven types of gardens are described, with a section at the end of each chapter providing practical information, examples of layouts and suggested plant combinations to help the beginner or even advanced gardener to create their own piece of heaven.

● Sacred Gardens *is available from* The Times *Bookshop (0990 134459) for £14.99, incl p&p.*

BRITISH LIBRARY



A print of a medieval walled garden, some of which were planted with medicinal plants

Britain's style dictator smuggles in exotic cuttings but seldom gets his hands dirty, **Jane Owen** finds

Conran refines horticulture

ME AND MY GARDEN: SIR TERENCE CONRAN

The ubiquitous Conran clan has so far educated us in matters of taste (interior decor); taste (food); taste (eating out); sex; taste (clothes); books and, now ... gardening. Sir Terence's latest book, written with my *Sunday Times* colleague Dan Pearson and already translated, among other languages, into Japanese, is a 272-page hardback covering aspects of modern garden design. Very modern. Martha Schwartz's bagel garden appears in it. Jekyll's work is absent.

Sir Terence's own gardens, one in the Home Counties, one near Tower Bridge, are a mix of old and new.

His apartment above the Conran shop in Shad Thames, a wind-dried ostrich steak's throw from his smart restaurants which dot the south bank near Tower Bridge, is an airy affair. To the east is a breakfast terrace with wicker chairs and a row of terracotta pots burgeoning with figs. In the corner, the skeletons of runner bean plants that kept Sir Terence supplied last summer. In season, the pots along the edge of this terrace froth with pelargoniums, petunias and lilies.

Inside the apartment, and in the offices below, pots of Sir Terence's favourite shrub, the pale-leaved evergreen Sparrmannia, hug the windows. On the west side a modern conservatory takes up the whole of one wall, with a terrace beyond. The conservatory is packed with plants designed to blot out, in Sir Terence's words, "some of the ugliest architecture in London". You can see the top of Tower Bridge, the House of Commons and St Paul's Cathedral but not Guy's Hospital and Price Waterhouse.

He proceeds to reel off names of buildings that fall short of the Conran ideal while Simon, the minder for this interview, moans quietly and wonders aloud about libel. If anything this seems to encourage Sir Terence.

Controversy certainly seems to follow him at the moment: a high-profile divorce from Caroline and a £10.5 million settlement which caused him some complaint, followed by an unfortunate misunderstanding over his comments about the Millennium Dome.

"I just felt that the Millennium Dome should not be given over predominantly to Christianity. Anyway, there are lots of under-utilised domes around the country which the Anglican church could use to whip up a bit of business. I am not directly involved, of course. I am only what Mr Mandelson likes to call one of his litmus papers — I give my opinions about things."



'During the war there was a great effort to grow for the pot. I had my own garden with carrots and runner beans'

He also has to run his burgeoning empires, and so leaves most of the gardening to others. His conservatory, for instance, is largely run by the Filipino housekeeper.

At the centre of the conservatory a tank is filled with arum lilies; around about there are lemon trees and a series of pots with mind-your-own-business running wild. The plan had been to keep the conservatory cool and green and Japanese but, Sir Terence says, his enthusiasm for the project meant far too much was packed in so now there is a hot, green, jungly effect.

He is fidgety about the conservatory, muttering he wished he'd taken a few hours to prune it back. His main occupation at Barton Court gardens, 20 acres of Berkshire, is pruning.

"I'm not a great one for turning the soil myself, although I once had a garden in Suffolk entirely overtaken by horseradish. I eradicated it in four years by carefully digging it out and then sieving the soil."

Today at Barton Court, a full-time gardener and his helpers do the donkey work. The gardens, designed by Sir Terence, are a gentle mix of old and new: for instance, there are yew hedges and wisteria dripping down the front of the house, plus a topiary garden, but the topiary is snipped into modern abstracts. Since he bought the 18th-century pile in 1972, he has added garden rooms and odd touches, such as a small herd of fibreglass deer by Nick Munro.

Vegetables are a Conran enthusiasm and one-and-a-half acres have been put aside for herbs and vegetables. Savoury varieties of mint and thyme and anything else not readily available to Sir Terence's eateries are the favoured crops.

"During the war my parents gardened in Hook, where we had escaped from the bombing in London. There was a great effort to grow for the pot. I had my own garden with things such as carrots and runner beans," he says.

The wartime gardening experience helped to inspire Sir Terence's Second World War garden at the Chelsea Flower Show, which went down in history for having included a decorative motif in the shape of a pair of knickers.

"I thought the judges would be terribly upset about the knickers but we won gold for the garden," Sir Terence says.

His latest passion is for a potato he found in Lapland and brought back to Britain to see if it would grow in such a mild climate. I suggest that the Ministry of Agriculture might not be thrilled by this freelance importing, which causes Simon to groan. But, once again, this merely encourages Sir Terence, who adds that, wherever he goes, he usually brings back cuttings or seeds. Simon squirms.

"Only little ones," says Sir Terence, airily.

● The Essential Garden Book *by Sir Terence Conran and Dan Pearson. Conran Octopus. £30.*

GILL ALLEN



Sir Terence Conran's London conservatory is more steamy jungle than cool Japanese



■ Watch out for and spray outbreaks of aphids on greenhouse plants as the weather warms up. Ventilate well on mild days.

■ Clip summer-flowering heathers *(Calluna vulgaris, Daboecia cantabrica, Erica cinerea, Erica vagans* and their varieties) just as the shoots begin to grow. Take off the leading tips and the upper flowered part of the stem, leaving the lower buds to fill out. This may mean taking 9in off *Daboecias* and only ½in off some *Callunas*. Do not cut back hard into old wood: it will not shoot again.

■ Plant potatoes, starting with the earliest varieties. Set the tubers 15in apart in well-manured soil, in rows 15in apart for earlies and 24-30in for large maincrop varieties. Tubers should be set with the majority of shoots at the top, and covered with only 2in of soil.

■ Plant gladioli at a depth of 6in in a rich, water-retentive soil. In areas of heavy or clay soil, set the corms on a handful of sand to improve drainage.

■ Protect wall blossom, newly set fruit and early flowering shrubs against sudden severe night frosts with netting or fleece. Protection from light frosts can be given with just a sheet of newspaper if the night is still. The weather may be kind at the moment, but there is still a good chance of frost through April and May.

■ Dig up and pot some roots of mint for early growth on a windowsill. Apple mint *(Mentha suaveolens)* is a good sweet, general-purpose mint, suitable for sauces or summer drinks.

AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

FREE CHILD TICKET FOR NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM



To celebrate the opening of The Natural History Museum's new exhibition, *Myths & Monsters*, and the release of *Men in Black* (who slay modern monsters) on retail video, *The Times* offers readers the chance to have a FREE entry ticket for a child under 14, when accompanied by an adult, between Saturday April 11 and Sunday April 19.

The exhibition features life-like animated robots modelled on mythological creatures, including the chimera, dragon and Cyclops alongside intriguing specimens and replicas from the Museum's own collections. Children will be able to explore questions such as: Did dragons and unicorns really exist? and Does a monster live in Loch Ness?

In today's Meg@ there is an exciting competition for children, in association with The Natural History Museum and *Men in Black*, which is released on video from April 8.

To obtain your FREE child ticket, simply present the voucher, right, when you buy one adult ticket, at The Natural History Museum admission desk, Cromwell Road, London SW7. The museum is open Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm and Sun 11am-5.50pm. **For more information about the exhibition, call 0171-938 9123.**

THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

THE TIMES/NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM FREE ENTRY VOUCHER

This voucher entitles the bearer to one FREE child (under 14) ticket when accompanied by one adult paying the full price for entry to The Natural History Museum between April 11 and 19, 1998.

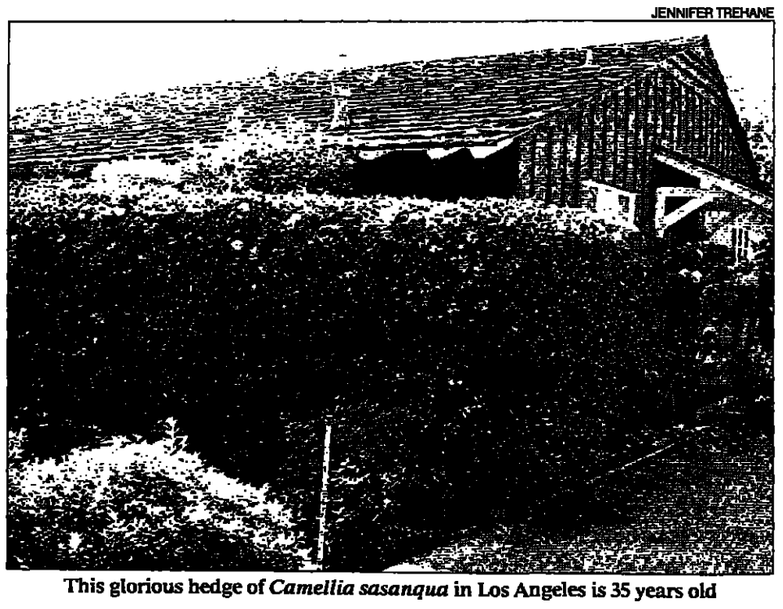
MIB™ MEN IN BLACK

CHANGING TIMES

The catwalk camellias

Stephen Anderton admires the blooms that make a hedge to remember

JENNIFER TREHANE



This glorious hedge of *Camellia sasanqua* in Los Angeles is 35 years old

There is something about formal double-flowered camellias that makes them too perfect for garden use, or at least for informal, woodland garden use. These beauties were meant for the horticultural catwalk, in a formal garden or conservatory, where you can shamelessly linger over their finer details. But stand a chorus line of these beauties out in the garden and what do you have? A hedge. And this is a role they play supremely well.

Often so-called flowering hedges simply change hue as a mass of small flowers erupt over the surface. Escallonia is a case in point, so is thorn, but camellias can produce a wall of showy flowers with every success, a temporary gallery of serious blooms. For a formal hedge, certain varieties of camellia can be perfect.

But remember that, unlike non-flowering hedges, a camellia hedge will not present a uniform face on every aspect; you cannot expect to make a "garden room" of camellias with good flowering on all sides, for light levels will vary too much. Even so a single run of camellia hedge can be shockingly stylish.

The variety to choose depends on your expectations — how fast you want the hedge to reach full size, and how tight you want to see its habit of growth. There are slow-growing camellias which make particularly tight, upright growth, and these produce the most formal hedges planted at 30in intervals. 'Tiptoe' is a late-flowering silver-pink semi-double. It has upright stems, giving it a similarity out of flower to Griselinia, although it is of a darker green. It grows less than a foot a year, but in time will rise to 8-10ft. The same holds true for 'Jury's Yellow', a mid to late variety introduced from New Zealand in 1976. It has white petals surrounding a pale yellow anemone-like centre. 'Anticipation' is another New Zealander introduced in 1962, a rose crimson with large peony-type flowers.

All these compact varieties need minimal attention to turn them into a tight hedge. Left alone they make cone-shaped bushes, but in a hedge a little nipping with secateurs to the sides every year, just after flowering, will keep the base from bulging and encourage the top to push higher. A modicum of extra width at the base is good in any hedge but is especially valuable in a camellia hedge, which requires good light to flower evenly all over.

I like to fix an occasional lower branch out sideways with a cane, along the line of the hedge, to encourage the scallop rhythm of the bottoms of the individual plants to blend into a straight hedge bottom.

Other tight growers include 'Margaret Waterhouse' (semi-double, light pink), 'Free Style' (semi-double, pale pink with a darker picotee edge), 'Roger Hall' (red formal double) and 'Forest Green' (red formal double with especially good glossy green foliage).

If a less tight hedge is required, a broader range of varieties can be used. In fact, you can try making a screen with most camellias, but varieties suitable for a relatively narrow form are 'Debbie' (rose pink, peony form), 'Laura Boscawen' (rose pink, anemone-centred, slow; mid to late season) and 'Señorita' (crimson rose, peony-form, mid to late).



Camellia 'Jury's Yellow' is a Kiwi variety

Camellias need a lime-free soil. Neutral soil is all right but acidic is better and they like an open soil. Heavy clay, even if acidic, will do them no good at all. Leaf mould is their favourite delicacy, and you should enrich the soil before planting with a good layer of leaf mould, or even coarse old garden compost.

They can be planted any time through spring and early summer, making sure that they are set no deeper than they were in the pots. They hate being set too low.

Preparation of the soil should be thorough, and the lower layers of the soil well broken up. But there is no need to incorporate lots of manure into the hole.

Moisture is important. Camellias which dry out in mid and late summer may drop flower buds in the autumn. Be careful when using camellias for formal hedges that you do not try to grow them in the dry lee of a wall.

Camellias like plenty of light but want keeping out of cold winds and early-morning eastern sun which can spoil the buds in frosty weather. A little overhead dappled shelter can be good further north but in the southwest a more open aspect is fine for straightforward varieties.

In favoured woodland gardens, some camellias will grow to 20ft, and at that size even the formal doubles begin to look natural, especially when the ground below is covered with petals. It is a wonderful sight.

● *Camellias are available from Trehane Camellia Nursery, Stapehill Road, Hampreston, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 7NE (01202 873490); Coghurst Nursery, Ivy House Lane, near Three Oaks, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 4NP (01424 756228).*

● Camellias: The Complete Guide to their Cultivation and Use *by Jennifer Trehane, published by Batsford in May, £30.*

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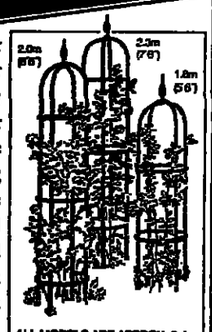
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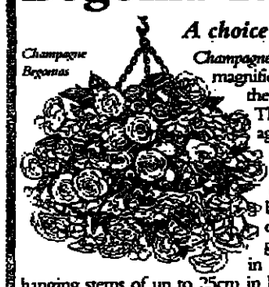
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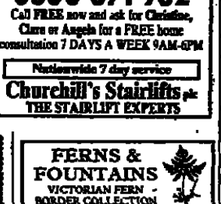


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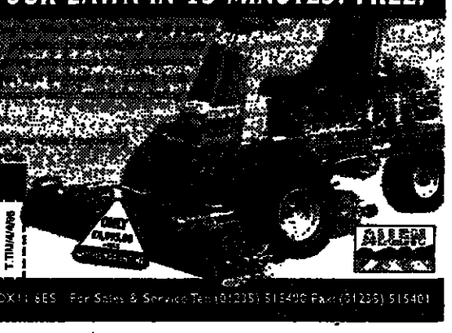
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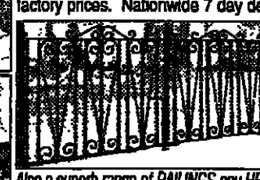
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Robeson's proud valley

Alan Road finds the Welsh celebrating their unlikely champion

Black faces were not uncommon on the streets of the Rhondda Valley in the days before pithead baths. A 6ft 4in tall black American star of the West End stage with a voice like a chapel organ was, however, quite another matter.

And so when four-year-old Martha burst into her Uncle Owen's office for the customary hug and found him deep in conversation with Paul Robeson, she turned tail and ran out into the hall, where she hid behind a grandfather clock. "I had never seen a black man and I had never seen a giant," she says.

Now 73, Martha Edwards is the custodian of the Robeson legend in the Rhondda and is busily preparing for celebrations of the singer's centenary next Thursday.

That day in 1929 when they met, he had been discussing with her uncle, a union official, the distribution of food and clothing, contributed by his English intellectual friends to the families of unemployed miners. The miners had been locked out of their pits by mine owners in revenge for their role in the General Strike, says Mrs Edwards. Conditions in the valley were desperate. Parents often went without so that their children could eat. "Our mother joined us for meals at the table, but we never appreciated how little she was eating," Mrs Edwards says.

In 1928, a handful of colliers decided that enough was enough and planned a hunger march to London. Fourteen men set off on the trek and when they arrived in London weary and hungry, the party was penniless. To make a little cash they did what Welshmen were best known for — they sang in the streets. Their musical tour took them to Drury Lane, where Robeson was taking London by storm in *Showboat*.

The star heard the singing in a tongue he did not recognise and approached the miners, who told him of their plight. On steps overlooking Trafalgar Square he gave his new friends an impromptu concert, including *Ole Man River*, his hit song from the show. The marchers were taken to a Lyons Corner House for their first square meal in days and, thanks to Robeson, they returned to Wales on the milk train from Paddington the following day. With them they carried a generous donation for the hungry and a promise of a Robeson visit to the Rhondda as soon as the *London run of Showboat ended.*

An unlikely link between Robeson and the Rhondda had been established and the following year the singer was as good as his word, as young Martha discovered to her surprise. He was met in Cardiff by the miners' leader Arthur Horner and stayed not at a hotel, but with Uncle Owen.

What the son of runaway slaves found on his visit to the valley appalled him, she says. Life above ground was scarcely easier than below. At Talygarn House, a miners' convalescent home, Robeson saw the true cost of coal. The singer gave a concert for more than 100 patients suffering from malnutrition and a lifetime spent inhaling coaldust.

Back in London, there were times when the actor must have yearned for simple Welsh hospitality. While starring with Peggy Ashcroft in *Othello* at the Savoy Theatre, says *Martha, he was refused* entry to the Savoy Grill because the management did not wish to offend American guests.

Robeson returned to Martha's valley in 1938 to film *The Proud Valley*. The original title of *David and Goliath* was subsequently changed to *The Proud Valley* on Robeson's insistence.

By 1950, Robeson's work for pro-Soviet causes and underdogs had incurred the wrath of white America. Promoters cancelled 80 concerts and the State Department withdrew his passport.

Thousands of South Wales miners signed petitions calling on President Eisenhower to reverse the decision, and from 1953 onwards they pointedly invited their hero to attend the annual miners' eisteddfod at Porthcawl. In 1957, they decided that if Robeson could not come to them, they would take the eisteddfod to him.

A transatlantic phone link was set up between the Grand Pavilion and an independent New York studio. The atmosphere inside the concert hall was electric and, when Robeson sang the Welsh national anthem, the choirs, the audience and thousands of miners and their families listening to a relay of the programme on the promenade burst into *"We'll keep a welcome in the hillsides..."*

> Robeson paid for the miners to have their first meal in days

Martha likes to think that theirs was the straw that broke the camel's back. The US authorities returned Robeson's passport soon afterwards and the following year the man they call the "honorary Welshman" was at the National Eisteddfod in Ebbw Vale as a guest of Aneurin Bevan, a former miner. Sadly, the years of persecution had taken their toll on the former All-American football star's health. He retired in 1974 because of ill health and died a virtual recluse in 1976.

Martha began her Robeson collection more than a decade ago after hearing a radio profile of him which did not mention his Rhondda connections. The collection contains photographs, film stills, newspaper cuttings, record sleeves and autographed programmes.

The exhibits are now on permanent loan to the Rhondda-Cynan-Taff Council and are on display at the Park and Dare Theatre, Treorchy, appropriately a former miners' welfare hall. At a centenary celebration there on Thursday, the recorded voice of Paul Robeson will once more be heard in the Proud Valley.

● *Paul Robeson Exhibition at the Park and Dare Theatre, Treorchy. Admission free. 11am-noon and 4.30-9pm (01443 773112).*

KOBAL



Paul Robeson filming in Wales in 1938. He insisted that the title be changed to *The Proud Valley*

If you don't mind me saying . . .

SEVEN LONG DAYS

David Bowker accepts a challenge: this week, being blunt



I USED to be quite good at speaking my mind, or hopeless at exercising tact, depending on your point of view. I remember asking a girl for a date when I was 18 and being told: "I'd rather we were just friends." *So I said:* "Sorry. I've got enough friends."

Since those wide-open-gob years, something has happened to me. My mother would say *I've grown up, but that isn't* strictly true. I've simply learnt that people are unlikely to offer me their time or their money if I tell them what I'm thinking.

But last Saturday, for one week only, I turned back the clock and became the big mouth I used to be. On Sunday afternoon, a second cousin phoned to suggest that, as he was in the neighbourhood, perhaps it would be nice if he came round? I said: "Nice for whom?"

This surprised him. I don't think he'd ever heard anyone say "whom" before. "Well, nice *for both of us.*" "It wouldn't be nice for me," I said. "We've got absolutely nothing in common." He tried to shrug this off. "What does it matter. We're family."

I said: "Yes, but you're from the useless side of the family. You're a distant relation. And that's the way I like you: distant. Don't get me wrong. I don't think you're a bad person or anything. I dare say that some people might even find you interesting." "Thanks a lot," he said bitterly.

"My problem," I continued, "is that when I'm with you, I always start thinking about funerals and the futility of human existence. Added to which, you've got a horrible high-pitched voice."

There was a long silence. Then he infuriated me by laughing and saying: "You're very honest. So am I. So you see? We have got something in common." "Good," I said. "But I still don't want you in my house."

On Wednesday, an editor took me to a restaurant in London's West End. I ordered the only vegetarian option on the menu, which turned out to be *some bland cheesy* concoction. When the waitress asked us if we were enjoying our meal, I said: "Not really." She looked startled. "Is something wrong, sir?" "Not exactly wrong," I admitted. "It's just a rather mediocre dish."

The waitress summoned the manager, who offered to send my food back to the kitchen. "I don't think that would work," I said. "The chef would only spit in it and send it back to me." This made the manager cross. He brought the chef out to see me. The chef, thankfully, was small and unassuming. "Now answer me honestly," said the manager, "does this look like a man who spits in food?"

Answering honestly, I said: "I don't know. What does a man who spits in food look like?" To cut a long argument short, the chef prepared me a special dish *that wasn't on the menu, and the* editor vowed never to be seen with me again.

I now understood why I was so unpopular as a teenager. *"Telling it like it is" is a highly* antisocial activity.

On Friday night, I travelled to Liverpool for a party. Being blunt in Liverpool is a complete waste of time. *In Liverpool,* everyone is blunt. Before the party, I went to a supermarket to buy a bottle of wine. Someone had blocked the aisle with a *shopping trolley. "What stupid* git left this here?" I said aloud.

A little old lady squared up to me. She was five feet tall and weighed in at about 70lb. "This *stupid git," she said. "What are* you going to do about it?" I smiled meekly. "Nothing," I said. "Have a nice day."

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'I didn't choose to drive this sort of vehicle or embarrass my children – it just crept up on me. Other farm cars are just as peculiar'

Hidden joys of a mobile dung-heap

DOWN TO EARTH



LUCY PINNEY

All week I've been haunted by the sad story of Vera and Reginald Hopkiss, Midlands pensioners with a Reliant Robin, who, because they were considered to have a silly car, were relentlessly picked on and jeered at by a group of teenagers.

I suppose this news item has lodged in my brain because our vehicles have always been deeply unpopular with our children. Our daughter, who is now at a fashionable university, insists that whenever we collect her at the end of term we do so at nightfall, or in the early hours of the morning, so that none of her friends sees our car. As she puts it, most bitterly: "It ruins my image, because I always dress very smartly, and then this mobile dung-heap comes and picks me up."

Although we haven't yet bought a Reliant Robin — despite leanings that way — we have, during the past 23 years, had a succession of socially unacceptable, ultra-cheap vehicles. The worst was a Marina van full of rusty holes. South West Water happened to be relining the pipes outside our farm with glass fibre resin at the time, and after engaging in high-level agricultural barter, my husband got hold of a bucket of this resin, and attempted to patch the holes in the van with it.

A few days later he painted the vehicle green, but it was a mistake, because a chemical reaction took place, causing the resin to fizz under the paint. As a result, the van oozed puddles of bilious froth, like a steadily discharging oil. After a year or so, this oozing van became quite a feature of East Devon, and people would come up to my husband at shows and ask to see it, out of vulgar curiosity.

Every so often I'd have to use it when I took my turn driving a gang of teenagers to the local riding stables, and my daughter was always mortified. Not only did her beautifully turned-out, cream-jodhpured companions — accustomed since birth to being chauffered in a spotless four-wheel drive — have to avoid the froth when they climbed in, but the inside was almost as horrid, since my husband was always ferrying sick animals around in it.

I didn't actively choose to drive this sort of vehicle or embarrass my children — it has just crept up on me, as a result of living on a small farm that doesn't make much money. I am not alone: plenty of other farm cars are just as peculiar. Our local mechanic once serviced a Triumph Dolomite that was running badly, and found the air filter box packed tight with hazelnuts and baby mice. Less charmingly, he recently opened a part-exchange Ford to valet the interior and found a week-old dead calf on the back seat.

At least we don't use our current car as a mausoleum — but it does suffer a bit from the livestock. The cats tend to sleep (and vomit) on the seats, and occasionally a chicken will lay a speculative egg in the footwell. Meanwhile, the ducks like to tug at loose electrical wiring, and the horses have been known to bite off the wing mirrors and scratch their backsides on the trim.

But there are some advantages to having a spectacularly grimy, run-down car. For a start, I can always pick ours out in the most crowded car park because of the superfluity of animal hair and cat paw prints on the roof. No one has ever attempted to steal it, either, rural joyriders being fiercely protective of their street cred. And the most tenuous acquaintances always recognise the car when I'm out motoring. Even breaking down can be a surprisingly good way of making new friends.

On a more personal level, a whole range of worries ceases to exist with a car of our quality: I never care in the slightest if the bodywork gets dented or scraped, and if a pet with violent diarrhoea needs to be rushed to the vet I don't even flinch.

One could even argue that a car such as ours is more ecologically sound than a smart new one. Not only is it an example of recycling in action — having had countless previous owners — but it is so coated inside and out with organic matter of every kind that it is almost like a piece of the farm itself. (When you sit on the cushions, fungus puffs out, and there's grass growing in the boot.)

Its age and cheapness are also useful signs that the owners haven't the income to go around indulging in annoying, agribusiness-type farming. In fact, ever since Gordon Brown indicated that car tax was to be frozen, pending a review of how the duty should be applied to deter environmental damage, I've been trying to rough out a system that would favour small farmers such as ourselves.

Perhaps there could be a sliding scale for car tax, so that it gradually gets reduced, depending on the number and size of animals that regularly abused the vehicle. Or maybe it would be simpler to just link the assessment to an index of teenage aversion: after all, this system is already partly in operation, since Reliant Robins — which we've been forbidden to purchase on pain of never seeing our children again — have the lowest petrol consumption, and, quite rightly, one of the lowest taxes of all.



Richard E Grant and Paul McGann's fumbling attempts to fit in with the locals in *Withnail and I*. Life in the country, especially in the pub, can be a minefield for newcomers

Rocket-fuelled wreckage

AJ Tipping reflects on the importance of making a good impression in your local pub



Town dwellers have an easy life. If they blot their copybooks in one urban pub, they just transfer their affections to the next one down the road. Things are different in the country: the next pub down the road is probably in the next county. And a lot depends on the landlord.

It is estimated that of the 5,000 pubs that have closed during the past five years, the majority have been in rural areas. Dwindling communities and harsher drink-drive limits have made the job of the out-of-town publican ever more difficult.

But what of the poor customer who has to patronise the country pub? The etiquette, furnishings and, most of all, the people, are vastly different from those found in towns.

I remember bursting through the door of some virulently twee Home Counties hostelry, bowling with laughter in the company of a drunken Ulsterman. We found ourselves in a cravatted void of stares and slow-motion G&Ts.

Unprovoked, an unpleasantly small dog rushed yapping towards us, exposing from somewhere near the centre of the soiled mop which constituted its body, alien fish-like teeth. The oleaginous landlord had evidently trained this miniature Cerberus to attack mirth on sight. It made the mistake of lunging for the ankles of an Irishman marching towards a bar. Dog met boot leather, was drop-kicked the length of the room, somersaulted the beer pumps, crashed into the optic of the Gordon's gin and subsided, whimpering.

"Good evening," boomed my companion. "Two large Jamesons please... and do you, er, sell Carlsberg Special Brew?" (always a provocative question in a respectable pub, but particularly so when uttered by a man with a voice like a waste disposal unit).

The proprietor's face mutated in various spectacularly unpleasant ways which all meant "no".

"Never mind, I thought the dog could use one," said my friend. For a moment the silence was absolute. Then the bar dissolved into hysterical joy.

It turned out we'd tapped into a rich vein of loathing for the new landlord and his dog. For in the country — where many of the pubs surviving wholesale closures are freehouses — the publican is a figure whose power rivals a medieval warlord and the pub is his fiefdom. But next time you are in one of those pubs that is so silent as you enter that you can almost hear that Clint Eastwood music, remember that the man with a single eye in the middle of his forehead who looks ready to kill and eat you is as paranoid as you are.

He's wondering whether you have just moved to the neighbourhood and intend to force all cockerels to wear muzzles. Are you from the brewery, and about to whip out an electronic measuring device and chuck all the wainscotting into a skip? Are you from the environmental health and about to replace the amniotic intimacy of the pickled eggs with individually wrapped snacks?

On the first occasion I visited my Somerset local I chose the bar over the empty lounge because it derived a marginally more convivial air from its solitary occupant — a hirsute man of about 40.

"Morning," he chirped as I entered, raising his pint of cider by way of a greeting. Simultaneously he seized his "hair" as if it were a hat and raised it at arm's length above his startlingly revealed bald head in a gesture of old-fashioned courtesy. My expression must have changed. "Cancer," he called out, eyes glinting.

I bought matches and left. But I had made some important discoveries. There was a dartboard and a skittle team. There was no piped music, no bouncy castle. Dogs were admitted and there was a secret garden around the back. It was important to be accepted here.

On my next visit, the place was crowded. Fortunately, I had made elaborate preparations to fit in by liberally applying to myself quantities of aerosol spray mud a friend found in an off-road vehicle boutique. I consolidated the good impression this made by drinking rough cider as quickly as possible.

I don't recall a great deal about the evening apart from the discovery that scrumpy is a class A drug with hallucinogenic qualities. It produces an optical effect similar to looking at everything through a telescope; you can remember people's huge yellow teeth, but not what they were saying.

At some point it became very necessary to leave. The aerosol mud started to froth spontaneously. I searched for the door, which evidently some thoughtless drinker had taken home. I may have been reduced to feeling my way around the walls with my eyes shut, searching for apertures. Finally I encountered a vertical planked surface that gave indications it might be a door. I shoved it. It wouldn't move. I lurched against it. It remained implacably shut. I shoulder-charged the vertical planks with all my might. There was a crash; a series of enraged shouts; and a cascade of breaking glasses as the toppled settle crashed away from me on to the farmers and wives who were sitting on the other side of it. I was still trying to decode the ensuing pandemonium when a draught of night air sucked me into the car park and I made my crab-like escape.

As I stumbled up the lane I heard distant shouts and an ominous grinding of gears. Headlights were coming my way. I pressed myself into the hedge and toppled backwards into oblivion. Resting in the soothing cow dung, I reflected on the likely consequences of my *faux pas*. I could never go back. The nearest pub was miles away, at the edge of the known universe. If I were to drive there in the future, I would probably lose my licence. If I walked, I would be run over by drunk drivers.

I would be forced to stay at home, get married, install Sky TV and beget four children who would stop me watching it. I supposed I could move back to the city. I was beginning to feel rather ill.

Songs of joy from early birds

FEATHER REPORT

READERS who are lying in bed worrying about life at four in the morning have one thing to cheer them up just now: the dawn chorus. April sees the climax of this outburst of song, in city gardens and countryside alike.

Song-thrushes have declined in number in Britain, but there are still plenty of them, and they dominate the chorus. They are usually the first to break the silence, as soon as the first hint of light appears in the east.

Normally they are unnoticeable birds, hopping about under bushes, but now they sit high in a tree, and their song, with its ringing, repeated phrases, can be heard half a mile away. It is a wonderfully joyous-sounding song, and the repetitions make it sound as though the bird is relishing every note of it.

Then, when it is still quite dark outside the window, the robin begins. It starts with a sweet, piercing note: then its voice drops with a poignant cadence such as you hear in Madam Butterfly's sad songs. Puccini might have scored the robin's repertoire. Within minutes, blackbirds strike up, quite different again — a rich crooning song, that always disintegrates after a few phrases into a confused babble, then resumes, mellow and calm, once more.

Wrens, common this year after a mild winter, tune up next with a shrill, rapid song, which always contains some throbbing notes like a nightingale, and a resounding, high-pitched trill. The tiny bird's whole body shakes as it sings, which it does repeatedly: up to 130 songs an hour have been recorded.

Great tits and woodpigeons wake a little later. The great tits generally chant "teacher, teacher", but you can hear many variations on this. Woodpigeons add a gruff, bass note. Hedge sparrows have a weak, trickling song, often from a yellow forsythia bush. All these species may occupy overlapping territories, but they space themselves out around the gardens so that they do not drown each other out.

And these are just the resident birds. Throughout April, summer visitors will be joining them. Blackcaps, willow warblers and chiffchaffs can be heard in the mornings in town gardens as they pass through, though most of them will move on to the countryside. If you live near woods, they will add their voices to your morning concert.

If you live near fields, whitethroats will soon be singing in the hedges — and you will probably have had skylarks greeting the dawn from high in the sky for a couple of months already.

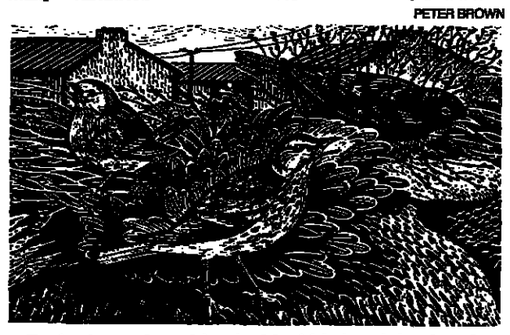
WHY do they sing like this? The singers are all male birds, and with their songs they are simultaneously courting their mates — and any other passing females — and warning neighbouring males to keep off.

The females themselves are at their most sexually alert in April, because it will soon be time for them to lay — and they are particularly responsive to males in the early morning. So females are the reason why the males are engaged in such a frenzy of singing at dawn.

DERWENT MAY

● **What's about:** *Birders — listen out for blackcaps singing in woodland. Twitchers — look out for a semipalmated plover at Dawlish Warren, Devon; a red-breasted goose at Loch Strathbeg, Aberdeenshire; a black-winged stilt at Pennington, Hampshire. Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 50p a minute.*

PETER BROWN



Early risers: the robin, the blackbird and the thrush

ADRIAN SHERRATT



John Letts is attempting to perfect a long-lasting material that will extend the lives of thatched roofs

One thatching expert is dedicated to producing a superstraw which will last

Thatch us if you can

The thatched roofs of England could last three times as long as they do at present if the ideas of an enthusiastic Canadian researcher are adopted.

Botanist John Letts, 37, has been researching 300 kinds of wheat straw in his laboratory at the University of Reading. His aim is to rediscover old varieties that he hopes will be sturdier and more long-lasting than most of the materials presently being used by thatchers. Eventually, he plans to breed what he calls "a super thatching wheat".

The quality of the straw used for thatching — based on it being a byproduct of wheat grown with the aid of nitrates — has aroused much controversy. The result for frustrated homeowners has sometimes been roofs that have had to be rethatched within a few years.

"If you want to produce high yields you must use nitrogen," says Mr Letts. "The problem is that while it improves the grain it ruins the straw for thatching because the stalks grow at a faster rate and become weaker."

The development of the baking industry is directly responsible for the lack of suitable straw, according to Mr Letts. "In the 19th century there were wheats that were perfectly good for both producing grain and thatching straw.

"Nowadays, the industry demands varieties that give high yields of grain with superior baking qualities, while good thatching straw comes from varieties with taller, tougher stems that produce lower yields of a grain more suited to organic and wholemeal bread."

Mr Letts is conducting his trials at the University of Reading as part of his PhD thesis on the history of wheat. Several of the varieties he is researching produce a straw that is much less brittle than modern thatching straws and contain just the right levels of flexibility needed to produce a long-lasting thatch.

Any seeds discovered in the historic thatches Mr Letts examines are dead, but it is sometimes possible to extract genetic material and compare it with the DNA from modern wheat.

Through his research into ancient thatched roofs, Mr Letts has discovered that in the past roofs were thatched with a wide variety of materials — from oats and barley to rushes and broom.

"In Ireland I have even found roofs that have been thatched with seaweed and potato stems, that had obviously produced a weathertight cover," he says.

Though more traditionally found on older buildings, thatch is now enjoying something of a revival as a roofing material on new homes.

"Last year we thatched eight of the 16 new properties we built in a village near Huntingdon and this year we shall thatch 12 of the 35 or so houses we plan to build in three separate counties," says housebuilder Clive Collisson, of Ambrosden Court in Bicester, Oxfordshire. The company specialises in luxury four-bedroom homes, costing upwards of £300,000.

"Until three years ago we built very few new thatched homes, but nowadays demand is certainly on the increase," says Mr Collisson.

In Dorset, where the county council has for the past six years had a policy of actively encouraging thatch on new-build, small thatched houses, often terraced, are being built by Philip Fry of C.C. Fry and Son of Litton Cheney, Dorchester.

"We build between 70 and 100 houses a year, and where there is already thatch in a village we try to mix it in with other roofing on new developments. During the past five years we have built about 20 thatched houses," says Mr Fry. Prices for one of his company's three-bedroom thatched properties average more than £100,000. Mr Fry feels that scepticism about living in new thatched homes has disappeared and demand has soared.

"People are far more enthusiastic about thatch nowadays. Advances in fireproofing and lower insurances for thatched roofs seem to have changed people's attitudes.

"However, a thatched roof on one of our new homes puts the price up by about £5,000. And with a lifespan of 20 to 30 years, a thatched roof generally lasts less than half as long as a clay tile roof."

CLIVE FEWINS

● *John Letts would like to hear from anyone living in an old thatched property whose roof is about to be stripped right back to the rafters for the purposes of a rethatch. He can be contacted at the Department of Agricultural Botany, the University of Reading RG6 6AS.*

Forward into battle



Ruth Gledhill declares a truce with one of the church's media soldiers

A CAPTAIN in the Territorial Army, the Rev Jonathan Jennings is well-equipped to counter the media army in his job as a "spokesman" for the Church of England at Church House, Westminster. On a daily basis, I and the other religion correspondents are flanked, foiled and parried, with varying degrees of success, by Mr Jennings and his crusading battalion of PR footmen.

On this occasion, it was clear that the victory would be entirely his. Because Mr Jennings, soon to be married, had arrived in my local church in Banstead, Surrey as assistant to the vicar, the Rev David Chance. On this day he was in the pulpit, and we were defenceless in the pews.

But we listened without a fight as Mr Jennings asked the questions many Christians are too frightened to ask, in case their faith is doubted.

On a train last week, he had been confronted by an evangelist who, mistaking him for a Catholic priest, condemned his sinfulness and informed him the Pope would not get him to heaven. Mr Jennings informed him that the Pope was "not part of the equation.

"I left him preaching doom and gloom to the commuters whose train was delayed," he said.

It was difficult to believe that God could wish for his own son the pain and horror of crucifixion, and that raised important questions. No Christian could escape the suffering of Christ, he said. The only way to begin to understand it, then, was to put it in the context of the Resurrection, three days later. "Sorrow comes in the night, but joy in the morning," he added, quoting the Psalmist.

All Saints church is one of five churches of varied denominations in the area which have grouped together in a "five-churches covenant". This church, dating from the 12th century, is the oldest of the five, with mention of a church on the site made in the Domesday Book of 1086. Mr Chance has added interest to this antiquity by making a special study of Celtic Christianity. He took study leave earlier this year to travel to Cornwall, Iona, Lindisfarne, Ireland and Wales.

Our service, sung evensong in an atmosphere of warmth and intimacy, with the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc Dimittis*, reminded us of our Roman roots but the Celtic spirit still prevailed. We prayed for God to lighten our darkness, and defend us from all the perils and dangers of the night ahead of us, for the love of His only Son.

● *All Saints Church, High Street, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2NQ (01737-351134).*

● *Entries are invited for* The Times *Preacher of the Year award 1998. Sermons by Christian or Jewish preachers should be sent to Ruth Gledhill*, The Times, *1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. The 30 top sermons from last year can be read in* The Times Best Sermons For 1998 *(Cassell £9.99)*

AT YOUR SERVICE

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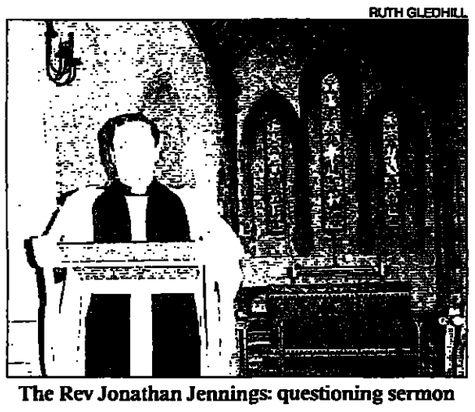
SERMON: Questioning but ultimately faithful. ★★★★

LITURGY: Evening prayer from the *1980 Alternative Service Book*. ★★★

SPIRITUAL HIGH: Sense of peace and holiness prevailed. ★★★★★

AFTER-SERVICE CARE: Priest offered to buy me a pint. ★★★

RUTH GLEDHILL



The Rev Jonathan Jennings: questioning sermon

Give God a sporting chance



ALLSPORT

Once deemed unmacho, Christian sportsmen Kris Akabusi, above, and Bernhard Langer, right, are no longer alone



Cyrille Regis

Christianity plays a central role in many sports star's lives. **Noam Friedlander** meets footballers proud of their faith

Alan Comfort was not a bad footballer. Every year, when Leyton Orient supporters are asked to name their all-time favourite player, the 1980s defender is invariably voted the "best they ever had". Yet Comfort's previous manager at Cambridge United was not quite as enamoured of him and in 1985 agreed his transfer to Orient. His argument was that Comfort, because he was a Christian, was not sufficiently "hungry" for success in match-winning situations.

"He took me aside and said, 'As a Christian, you can't be relied on to give 100 per cent commitment, nobody wants a Christian on their team'," says Comfort. "I was only 23 and was so pleased to move to Orient where their manager, Frank Clark, told me that my faith made no difference to him."

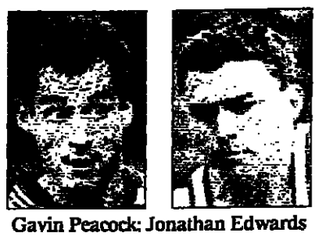
Today, the Christian footballer no longer walks alone. Support comes from a network of like-minded colleagues. The emergence of famous Christian sports personalities such as the former 400m hurdler, Kris Akabusi, triple-jumper Jonathan Edwards and golfers Bernhard Langer and Alison Nicholas has given the sports world religious role models.

Glenn Hoddle, the coach who is leading England into the World Cup finals this summer, is a Christian.

Christians in Sport, registered as a charity in 1980, is an umbrella organisation providing pastoral care and Biblical instruction to all professional sports players, with emphasis on football, rugby, cricket and golf.

Graham Daniels, manager of non-league Cambridge City and director of Christians in Sport, travels throughout England and Scotland conducting meetings with Christian footballers. The meetings are informal where players, and sometimes partners, listen while Daniels reads a passage from the Bible and relates it to the game.

Gavin Peacock, captain of Queens Park Rangers and host to London group meetings, points out: "We're all footballers and we have faith in God. We can talk about it with other footballers and they know exactly what you're going through as a player because he's been there or he's going through it."



Gavin Peacock: Jonathan Edwards

While these players might be resolved in their beliefs, there are still significant doubts among their fellow pros, says Daniels. "Managers are always worried that if people become religious they lose their edge. When people realised that Cyrille Regis was a Christian, that made a huge impact as he was known to everyone in the game. He played top-level football and was a tough centre-forward and shattered the image of a Christian footballer."

Peacock, a 30-year-old veteran of more than 400 matches and nearly 100 goals, muses: "People don't see that Christianity is macho..."

Comfort found God after displacing Daniels at Cambridge United. "(Daniels) was given three months' notice and I expected some resentment. But there was none. He told me that the best thing I could do was to believe in God. Dressing rooms can be ruthless places. The other players would mock him, saying, 'God's not doing much for you, is he?' But Graham was certain that God had a plan for his life and cared about him. I began to realise I'd never met anyone like him. He had a depth of feeling which I never encountered while, for me, there was nothing under the surface. One Tuesday night I got in my car and drove around Cambridge until I found a church. I found peace with God that night. It made so much sense."

Comfort is an ordained minister working as a football chaplain for Leyton Orient. So, too, are Alan West at Luton and Peter Hart at Walsall who were two of the few players in the 1970s known for their faith.

Peacock is sometimes challenged by people who do not recognise the value of his chosen path. "Some people think that religion's a crutch and why should footballers need Christianity? You're in the limelight, you're getting adulation from fans and you're getting well-paid for something you love doing. Why should you need religion? My faith has helped me on and off the field."

A shift as spiritual night-watchman for God

Credo

NIGEL McCULLOCH



Service and humility are the qualities vividly illustrated in the example and words of Jesus, which will be recalled by all Christians during the traditional Holy Week devotions on this coming Maundy Thursday.

In many churches, after the last service of the day, altars will be stripped, ornaments removed, and a special Watch will be kept through the night into Good Friday — a spiritual watching, keeping awake with Jesus during His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, prior to His arrest.

Earlier, during the Last Supper in the Upper Room, Jesus had taken bread, given thanks and broken it. Giving it to His disciples, he said: "Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

Then, after supper, He took the cup and, giving thanks over the wine, said: "Drink this, all of you; this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." Maundy Thursday is therefore partly a celebration of Our Lord's institution of the Eucharist.

But it is a day rich in other meanings, too. The name Maundy — from the Latin *mandatum* meaning commandment — reflects the vital importance of what Jesus said on that same evening, after he had washed the disciples' feet. "A new commandment I give you: That you love one another."

The story of the foot-washing is one of the most poignant and powerful in the gospels; and it has inspired many an artist. The evocative paintings by Ford Madox Brown and Sieger Koder have sought to convey to later ages and generations a Maundy message that is well matched to modern needs.

It was during the Last Supper, before Judas Iscariot left to betray Him, that Jesus got up from his place, took off His outer robes, received a towel which he wrapped around His waist and, thus acting as a slave, poured water into a basin, and began to wash His disciples' feet, drying them with the towel.

This was not the usual courteous foot-washing given by a slave to a guest coming in from the dusty road. Nor indeed was it normal for footwashing to be done during a meal. Perhaps this was a spontaneous gesture by Jesus — a response to the disciples' arguments about which of them would be the greatest in God's kingdom.

When Jesus came to Peter, the disciple protested. The Master told him that one day he would understand the meaning of the act; but still Peter refused.

Jesus then warned him that, if he did not allow his feet to be washed, he could have no further relationship with him. At this, Peter's resistance immediately vanished and he asked Jesus to wash not only his fet, but his hands and his head as well.

But Jesus washed only his feet. In Ford Madox Brown's picture Peter is represented as feeling this is still wrong and that, moved as he is, he will be glad when it is all over.

● *Nigel McCulloch is the Bishop of Wakefield*

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CHANGING TIMES

Church services tomorrow

Palm Sunday

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 Ch Euch. Darke in F; 3.15 Confirmation and Euch. Rutter in D, The Archbishop.

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch, Crux fidelis (John of Portugal).

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Ch Euch. Mass for five voices (Byrd); 4 Ch E. Fifth service (Tomkins).

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 Ch M, A: Christus factus est (Anerio); 10.30 Euch. Missa L'homme armé sexti toni (Josquin); 4 Ch E, Canon Hindley.

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8, 11 Euch; 3.30 E, A: Hosanna to the Son of David (Weelkes).

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL: 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Ch Euch. Darke in E; 3.30 Ch E, Responses (Plainsong), Canon J Simpson.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M; 10.50 Blessings of Palms, Messe solennelle (Langlais); 3.15 E, Andrews in D; 6.30 Compline, Rev P G C Brett.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Jackson in G; 3 E, Walmisley in D minor.

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11.15 Euch, Wood in the Phrygian Mode, Canon D Knight; 6 Music for Passiontide.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Euch, Short service (Tallis); 11.30 M, The lamentaion (Bairstow); 3.30 E, Watson in F; 6.30 Stainer's Crucifixion.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, Pueri Hebraeorum (Palestrina); 11 S Euch, Darke in F; 3.30 E, Glory and honour and laud (Wood).

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Dublin: 11 S Euch, Hosanna to the Son of God (Weelkes); 3.30 Ch E.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC; 10 M, Canon Jeffery; 11.15 S Euch, Missa simile est regnum coelorum (Lobo); 6 E, Wood in E flat.

DERBY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.45 S Euch, Jackson in G; 6 Ch E, A: A Palm Sunday Antiphon (Morgan), Canon R Parsons.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, The Lamentation (Bairstow), Canon M Perry; 11.15 HC, Messe solennelle (Langlais); 3.30 E, Jackson in G minor.

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Messe cum jubilo (Duruflé), Canon J Inge; 3.45 E, Magnificat (Buxtehude).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M; 10 S Euch, Messe solennelle (Langlais); 3 E, A: Hosanna to the Son of David (Weelkes); 6.30 Special service.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.15 Blessing of Palms; 10.30 Euch, Messe solennelle (Vierne); 3 E, A: Glory and honour (Wood).

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 S Euch, St Matthew Passion (Victoria); 6.30 E, Sumsion in G, Rev Dr R Harvey.

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M; 8 HC; 10 L, Darke in F; 3.30 E, Murrill in E, Canon B Chave.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 L, Stanford in B flat; 3.30 E, Watson in E.

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 9.30 S Euch; 11.15 M; 12.30 HC; 3.45 E.

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 Litany & Euch; 3 Ch E, Rev G Davies; 4 HC.

LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL: 8, 9 C; 10.45 S Euch, Darke in A minor; 12.15 HC; 3.30 Music for Passiontide; 6.30 E.

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M; 9 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, St Matthew Passion (Victoria); 4 Stainer's Crucifixion; 6.30 EP.

NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M; 8 HC; 9.30 S Euch, Hosanna to the Son of David (Weelkes); 6 Ch E, Responses (Aylewarď), Walmisley in D minor.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Jackson in G; 3.30 E, O vos omnes (Casals); 6.30 Stations of the Cross.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 9.30 M; 10.30 Euch, Missa cantuariensis (Rubbra); 3.30 E, Dyson in F.

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Civitas sancti Tui (Byrd); 5.30 EP; 6 Stainer's Crucifixtion.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 9 Palm Procession; 9.30 Euch, Drop drop slow tears (Gibbons); 11.30 M, A: Lift up your heads (Mathias); 12.30 Euch; 5.30 E, Darke in F, Canon M Glanville-Smith.

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M; 10.30 S Euch, Messe solennelle (Vierne); 3.15 E, Gloucester service (Howells).

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Missa Bel' amfitrit altera (Lassus); 11.45 M, Responses (Smith); 3 Ch E, Stanford in B flat.

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 MP; 10.30 S Euch, Missa brevis (Palestrina); 6.30 E, Short service (Gibbons).

SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL: 9 Euch; 11 Ch Euch, Collegium regale (Howells); 3 Ch E, Rev V Stock; 6.30 BCP Euch, Leighton in D, A: Vexilla regis (Bruckner).

SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.30 M & L; 8 HC; 9.30 C; 11 S Euch, Jackson in G; 3.15 E, Stanford in B flat; 5.45 Compline.

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 M; 10 Sol S Euch, A: Miserere Mei Deus (Byrd); 5.30 Organ meditation; 6 E, Responses (Aylewarď), Fauxbourdons (Whitlock).

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 C; 11 Sol Euch, St Matthew Passion (Victoria); 4 Music for Passiontide.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 11 Blessing of Palms, Missa brevis (Kodaly), Canon D Gray; 3 E, Jesus college service (Mathias); 5.45 Organ Recital; 6.30 ES.

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL: 7, 8, 9 Mass; 10 Sol Mass, Mass for four voices (Byrd); 12 Mass; 2.45 Organ recital; 3.30 Sol V & B, Adoramus te Christe (Monteverdi); 5.30, 7 Mass.

YORK MINSTER: 7.30 M; 8, 8.45 HC; 10 S Euch, Missa papae Marcelli (Palestrina); 4 EP; 6 St John Passion.

ST ALBAN'S CATHEDRAL, Hertfordshire: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11.15 sol Euch, Mass for five voices (Byrd); 6.30 E, Stanford in B flat, Rev Dr C Cunliffe.

ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL, Aberdeen: 8 HC; 10.15 S Euch, Missa ave Jesu (Oldroyd); 6.30 Ch E, Hosanna to the Son of David (Gibbons).

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Denbighshire: 8 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Darke in A minor, Very Rev K Goulstone; 3 Service of Welcome, A: A Gaelic blessing (Rutter).

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL, Pembrokeshire: 8 HC; 9.30 Cymun Bendigaid; 11.15 Ch M, Stamford in C, Rt Rev D Thomas; 6 Ch E, Pueri hebraeorum (Plainsong).

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 S Euch, Collegium regale (Howells); 11.45 HC, Canon M Shaw; 3.30 Ch E.

ST FIN BARRE'S CATHEDRAL, Cork: 8 Euch; 11.15 Ch Euch, Darke in E, Rev E W Hunter; 7 Ch E, Purcell in E minor.

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL, Southwark: 8, 10 LM; 11.30 Sol Mass, Missa de angelis; 5 Stations of the Cross; 6 LM.

ST GILES CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8, 10 HC; 11.30 MS, Mass for five voices (Byrd); 6 Cathedral Choir; 8 ES, Rev I K Stiven.

ST MACHAR'S CATHEDRAL, Old Aberdeen: 11 MS, A: Hosanna to the Son of David (Weelkes), Rev R Frazer; 6 HC.

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, Dublin: 8.30 Euch; 11.15 S Euch, Five part mass (Byrd); 3.15 Ch E; 4.20 Organ recital: David Leigh, Symphony no 3 (Vierne).

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 8.45 M; 11 S Euch, Missa cantuariensis (Rubbra); 3.15 E, Cesar's service (Amner), Rev J Halliburton; 6 ES, Rev M Saward.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy, Kievan and traditional polyphony, Met Anthony.

ALL SAINTS, W1: 8 LM; 10.20 MP; 11 HM, Rachmaninov in B flat, Preh J Gaskell; 5.15 LM; 6 E & B.

ALL SOULS, W1: 8 C, 9.30, 11.30 MP, Most Rev Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; 6.30 EP, Rev R Tice.

THE ASSUMPTION, W1: 10.45, Missa papae Marcelli (Palestrina).

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 10 Children's Procession; 11 C; 6 E.

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, WC2: 11.15, 12.20 HC; 6.30.

FARM STREET, W1: 8, 9.30 LM; 11 HM, Missa frère Thibault (Lassus); 12.30 LM; 4.15 Mass; 6.15 LM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, SW7: 9 HC; 11 MS; 5, 7.30 Informal Service.

HOLY TRINITY, Sloane Street: 8.45 Euch; 11 S Euch, Missa secunda (Hassler).

THE ORATORY, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass; 12.30 Mass; 3.30 V & B, Vexilla regis (Wingham); 4.30, 7 Mass.

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH Inverna Gardens, W8: Palm Sunday.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, EC2: 9.45 HC; 11 MS, Rev Dr L Griffiths.

ST ANNE AND ST AGNES (Lutheran), Gresham St, EC2: 11 Ch Euch, Rev P D Schmiege; 2 Swahili HC; 7 Ch Mass.

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, EC1: 9 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Missa brevis (Berkeley); 6.30 Music for Passiontide.

ST BRIDE'S, EC4: 11 Ch Euch, Jackson in G; 6.30 Ch E, Gloucesrer Service (Howells).

ST CLEMENT DANES, WC2: 11 Ch Euch, Mass for five voices (Byrd).

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, SW1: 11 Very Rev J H McIndoe; 6.30 Choral service.

ST ETHELDREDA'S, EC1: 11 S Mass, St Matthew Passion (Victoria).

ST JAMES'S, Garlickhythe, EC4: 10.30 S Euch, John Paul

ST JAMES'S, Sussex Gardens: 10.30 S Euch, Missa brevis (Seiber); 6 Ch E, Posuerunt super Caput Eis (Ceballos).

ST JOHN'S, E15: 11 HC, Rev D Richards; 6.30 EP, Rev D Gritten.

ST LUKE'S, SW3: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Vinea Mea electa (Poulenc); 12.15 HC; 6.30 E, Rev C Kevill-Davies.

ST MARGARET'S, SW1: 9.30 MP, Canon D Gray.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch; 11.30 Visitors Service; 2.45 Chinese Service; 6.30 Shadowlands performed by Theatre Roundabout.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, W8: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11.15 Ch M; 12.30 HC; 6.30 E.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, NW3: 10.15 S Euch, Wood in the Phygrian mode.

ST MARYLEBONE, NW1: 8 HC, 11 Ch Euch, Stravinsky mass; 6.30 Healing.

ST PAUL'S, SW1: 8, 9 HC; 11 Sol Euch, Passion gospel (Victoria).

ST PETER'S, SW1: 8.15 HC; 9.45 Family Euch; 10.45 S Euch, Salvator mundi (Tallis).

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PETER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9.15 HC; 11 M, Short service (Hunt).

CHAPEL ROYAL, St James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 S Euch, Schubert in G.

CHAPEL ROYAL, Hampton Court Palace: 8.30 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Mass for five voices (Byrd); 3.30 Music for Palm Sunday.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley St, W1: 11 S Euch, Adoramus te Christe (Handel).

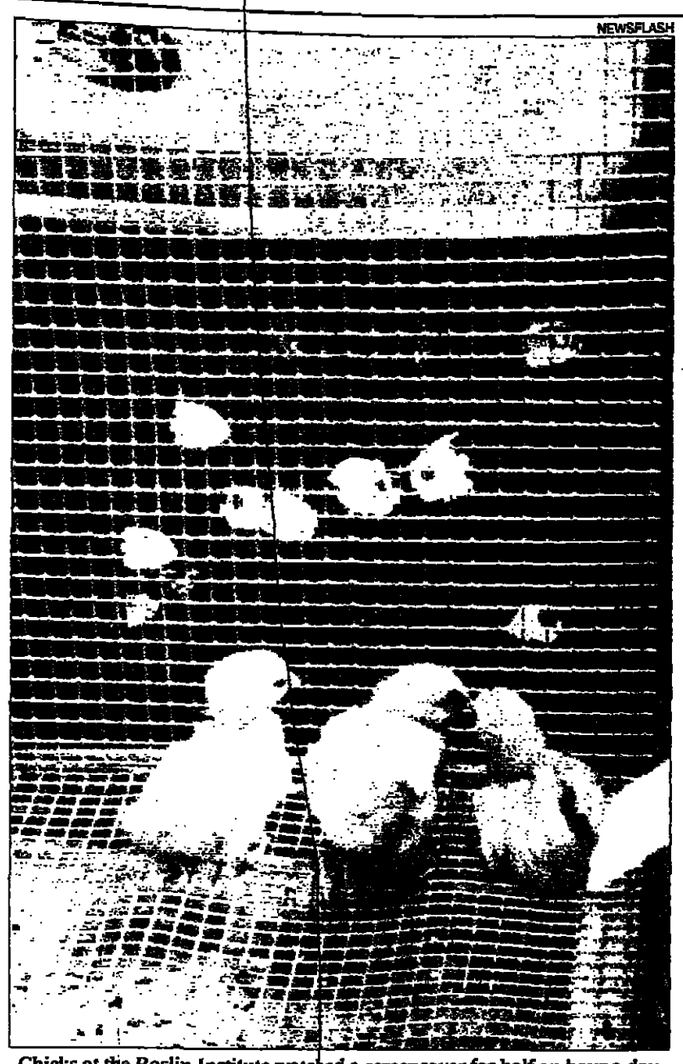
QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11 S Euch, Ireland in C, The Chaplain.

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 Ch HC, Hosanna to the Son of David (Gibbons), Band of the Grenadier Guards, Rev L H Bryan.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, SE10: 11 S Euch, Jackson in G, Rev R Nurton.

● *Compiled by Deborah King.*

هكذا من الأصل


NEWSFLASH

Chicks at the Roslin Institute watched a screensaver for half an hour a day

Jeremy Cherfas is not surprised by the news that chickens seem to enjoy watching television

Anything good on the box tonight, dear?

Is it any wonder that chickens allowed to watch television for half an hour a day are happier? For someone who still vividly recalls four years spent studying the effects of controlled doses of novelty on young chicks, this week's report from Dr Bryan Jones at the Roslin Institute near Edinburgh provoked a prolonged bout of reverie.

Dr Jones's chicks were given half an hour in front of a screen saver. This is one of those delightful programs that are supposed to protect your computer monitor from overload but in reality do no more than remind you that you have done no work for five minutes.

Unlike humans, who quickly get bored with singing along to an inane bunch of flying toasters, Dr Jones's chickens sat enthralled for hours on end. They showed every sign of looking forward with great pleasure to their viewing sessions and rewarded the researchers by growing more rapidly, laying larger eggs more regularly and being generally more phlegmatic and amenable.

In my academic days, few of us even had a computer, let alone a screen saver. We did, however, have a steady supply of hatching chicks. Since I had a burning desire to understand the impact of novelty on the development of chickens, I used simple cut-out plywood shapes — a square, a circle, a triangle — and simple colours: red, blue and yellow.

Each day, in the dark so as not to overstimulate their little brains, I moved the chicks from box to box in an elaborate quadrille designed to expose them to one, two or three such visual delights.

And on the seventh day, I would plonk each chick in front of a stimulus it had never seen before and for 16 minutes and 40 seconds I would count its heart-rending peeps, I would measure how far it paced, and I would note when and where it went to the loo.

I got my PhD, which was the whole point of the exercise, but, 25 years on, the only result I can remember clearly is this: chicks somehow divined which stimulus they were going to be tested with, even though I myself did not know until the morning of their assessment.

This strange and upsetting result came to light when I analysed the deaths — a sad, often inexplicable and inevitable consequence of working with day-old chicks.

I proved (statistically) that novelty itself was not killing the chicks. But to my astonishment, when I analysed the deaths according to whether the birds were going to be tested with the red triangle, the blue circle or the yellow square, there was an overwhelming excess of tiny fatalities among the birds who, my code revealed, would have been tested in front of the yellow square had they not croaked.

Actually, of course, this result is just one of those statistical errors that crop up from time to time, and the reason I have not published it until now is that any competent scientist would understand the error and dismiss the result. But it was a moment of light relief in the lab.

It was well known, for example, that animals would work — as in press a lever — to see interesting things. Chicks would work to witness a working model of a mother hen. Monkeys would tap like telegraph operators to get a glimpse of a train set running around, but if the train were standing still they soon became bored.

They would work even harder to see another monkey, even though they were not deprived of company the rest of the day. They really liked to watch cartoons and, best of all, they watched extremely violent cartoons in shorter bursts, but for a longer total duration, than the simpering sugary-sweet ones.

All this made complete sense to anyone prepared to commit the cardinal sin of anthropomorphism. So does the idea of zoo-keepers giving their charges access to television, as has happened in many places. I have talked to farmers whose cows milk better when the radio is on, and seen pigs that have learnt to use a specially modified remote control to change channels, and switch off when they have had enough.


JEREMY WILLIAMS

Chimpanzee using the remote control to change television channels

All animals need, and will seek out, a modicum of stimulation. That is especially true if they are denied much stimulation most of the time. Monkeys quickly tire of film loops, especially if they contain no monkeys. But some people can watch the same film hundreds of times and still not get bored.

Just how much stimulation constitutes a modicum probably depends more on the individual animal's processing capacities than anything else.

That chicks like screen savers is therefore no surprise to me. That it makes them more efficient production units is, however, a new piece of information, although I will be even more surprised if any intensive egg or broiler farmers bother to install screens for their charges.

I certainly will not be plugging in a special television set — not permanently, anyway. But as the essence of science is supposed to be repeatability, I did put Ruby, our Rhode Island Red, in front of my flying toasters screen saver. She watched them for a while — but then she went to sleep.

The creatures from cyberspace



MARC ARUNDALE

Choosing pets on the Internet is easy, but buyers should be careful that they stay within the law, says **Jane Symons**

Browsing though the world's biggest pet shop is informative, bizarre and at times downright dangerous. Never before has there been more need for the buyer to beware, as shopping for your pet on the Internet allows you to buy anything from an albino camel to 24-carat gold-plated name tags.

As well as getting delivery of an exotic species from some Websites, though, you may also be taking delivery of a seven-year prison sentence and unlimited fine. It is not illegal to buy a pet on the Net and surfing sites within Britain will help you to track down a particular breed or species in minutes. But going worldwide can be dangerous. Animal welfare groups fear that the Internet is being used to further the illegal trade in endangered species. As an RSPCA legal officer says: "It's like pornography. The sites exist, but it's a matter of finding them."

What may be sold in one country could be illegal in another. Some species need documentation set out in the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), and others may be subject to quarantine.

The RSPCA condemns the practice and Jim Phillips, head of the society's veterinary department, says the trade in animals on the Internet is "totally reprehensible. It is no way to buy a living thing". He points out that many exotic pets require specialised care and urges potential shoppers to "think very long and hard before taking on an exotic animal. And with domestic animals, our advice is always to see them at the breeder's with their mother and that's certainly not possible over the Internet".

However, if you are determined to go "Windows" shopping for a pet on the World Wide Web, you can protect yourself by checking first with the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions hotline on 0117-987 8749. Some local authorities also have their own rules governing "dangerous" animals.

The products and information on the Web vary according to which search engine you use. Also be aware of the potential for double entendre — searching for pets may produce some sites you'd rather not explore. UK Plus — which is accessible via the library on the *Times* Website at http://www.sunday-times.co.uk or direct at http://www.ukplus.com — will generate more than 13 million matches on a worldwide search for the words "pets, mail, order".

Breeders in the United States were the first to recognise the benefits of advertising on the Web and dominate it with thousands of sites, which include photographs, words and even sound effects. And their British counterparts are catching up quickly. The British Dog Breeders Council pages can be found on http://www.k9netuk.com and has links to dozens of breeders. Most include news of forthcoming litters and an e-mail address for further information. You can also expect to find details of each dog's family tree and show successes.

However, don't expect simply to key in an order and await delivery of your pet. Reputable breeders want to ensure that their animals will be well cared for and will probably take as much time checking buyers as the buyers do breeders.

Cat lovers can access http://www.fanciers.com and follow the links to track down a pet. Another useful site is the Cat-a-log — http://www.vervain.demon.co.uk — which includes an e-mail inquiry form where you can detail your requirements and receive information on breeders and recent litters by return. Pet-food manufacturers sponsor http://www.petcat.co.uk, a site that offers a mine of information, as well as links to cat clubs and breeders.

There are hundreds of ways to begin your hunt and as you try different search engines and key words to find the perfect pet you will also discover pages about the show requirements for different breeds, owner's clubs, what to look for when buying and how to care for your pet.

If it is pet accessories you want, Pets Warehouse in New York — http://www.petswarehouse.com — carries a vast range of pet products. It stocks 11,000 different items and can access a further 23,000 through its database. An on-line catalogue is currently being put together and should be up and running soon.

Via e-mail, Pets Warehouse spokesman Bob — the Net's user-friendliness often extends to discarding surnames — confirms: "We will ship any place in the world."

But he says it is important to be aware of the restrictions on the international trade in animals. "Fish are not too bad paperwork-wise, but some require Federal and international CITES papers before they are exported," he says. "Also the UK prohibits certain animals. We would need to obtain a permitted list from the Government."

There are no such restrictions on pet products and the Net offers everything from designer kennels to toys for bored ferrets. On the farm and pet section of http://www.shopping.com you can buy a ferret play tunnel for $9.64 or a Dogloo kennel with a three-layer construction which "commands a flea-free environment", available in a range of sizes, from $49.20. Both are available to customers anywhere in the world except Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea.

Radio Systems Corporation in Knoxville, Tennessee — http://www.radiosys.com — specialises in electronic gadgetry such as a training collar for dogs which delivers a squirt of citronella if they step out of line or an electronic comb to zap cat fleas. Its products are also available through Petsafe in Oxfordshire on 01993 823833, or e-mail: sales@petsafe.co.uk.

If you really must have a gold-plated name-tag — in a range of shapes including fire hydrant, bone and cat — try Best Friend Pet Tags in Las Vegas at http://www.pettags.com. And that albino camel? You'll find it under exotic animals of Livestock World at http://www.pitchfork.com — but be prepared for hefty shipping costs from the Australian outback.

Once you've found your perfect pet and pampered it with products from around the world, you can use the Net to find owners' clubs and sites filled with helpful information about their care. If they fall ill, you can track down a tonic or herbal remedy via the British Canine Shopping Centre — http://fido.k9.co.uk — or catch up on the latest advances in veterinary science — http://www.vetweb.co.uk.

If none of that helps and they pass over the rainbow bridge to pet heaven, you can find them a plot in cyberspace cemetery — see http://www.petloss.com. While you are on-line you can also check lighting-up times for the international candle ceremony in memory of dead pets.

And if the experience has left you disillusioned you can always call up http://www.go2net.com/internet/useless/useless/pets.html — a page which explores the uselessness of having a pet in the first place.

A VET WRITES

Q I will be out of the country for ten months, *starting in October*, and George, the six-year-old cat which I've had since a kitten, will stay behind. Neither friends nor family are able to look after him, and I don't want to put him in a cattery. I'm looking for a temporary home while I'm away. He's *an outdoor cat and needs a* tolerant carer. Any advice?

A The ideal solution is for George to stay in your house attended by a responsible carer who visits twice a day, feeds him and talks to him. If George can come and go via a cat flap he'll continue as an outdoor cat in familiar territory.

If you're giving up your house and George has to move, make sure he's homed at least five miles away — anywhere closer and he'll come back to his old home, with no one to welcome him. The RSPCA or the Cats' Protection League may be able to suggest potential foster homes, but ten months is a long time and, if you can't find the right carer, kennels are the only answer. George might not like it, but he'll be safe, warm and well fed.

Q Toby, my white miniature poodle, developed brown stains on the side of his face below his eyes. The vet tells me his tear ducts are blocked and the marks are tear stains. Why is this?

A Healthy eyes are bathed in tears continuously and the excess drains away via the tear duct. Toby's drain could have been blocked by debris and cells after a mild eye infection. It is possible to flush out the ducts and unblock them — with the dog under anaesthetic — but often the blockage recurs. Wash Toby's face every day to remove the tears and prevent brown stains forming or sore patches where the tears scald his skin.

JAMES ALLCOCK

● *Write to The Times Vet, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. He regrets that he cannot reply to letters personally.*

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LASKY, seven, and Sunny, six, are labrador-alsatian crosses. They are affectionate and playful and would suit a family home with children and other pets. They are both housetrained and neutered but because they are brothers they would need to be rehomed together. If you would like to adopt Lasky and Sunny, please contact the RSPCA Mayhew Animal home at Kensal Green, London W10 (0181-969 0178).

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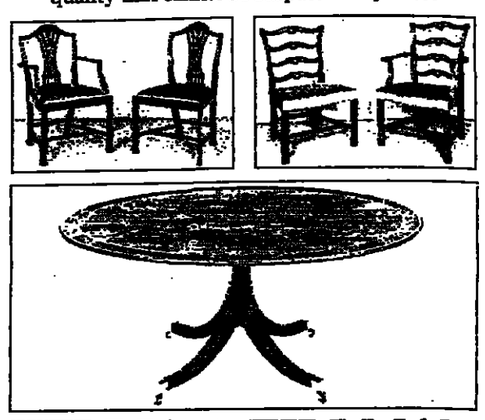
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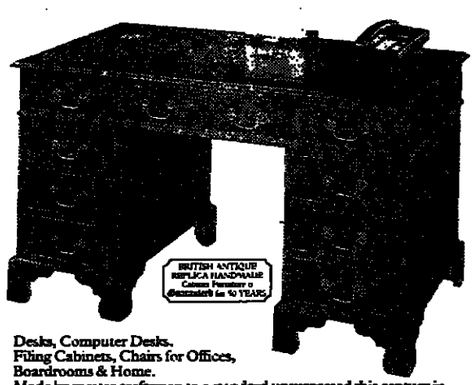
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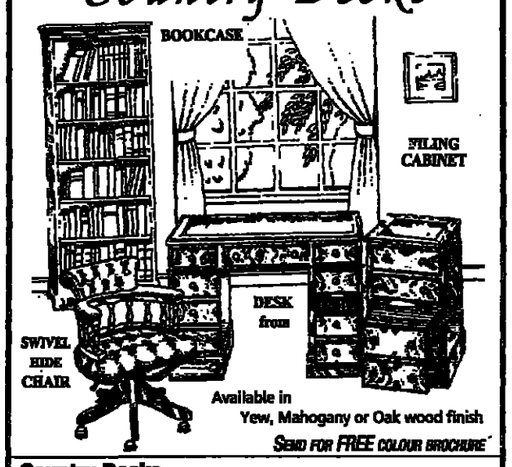
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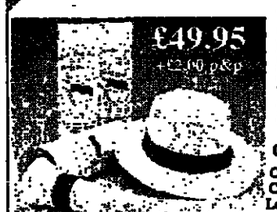


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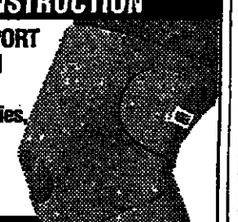
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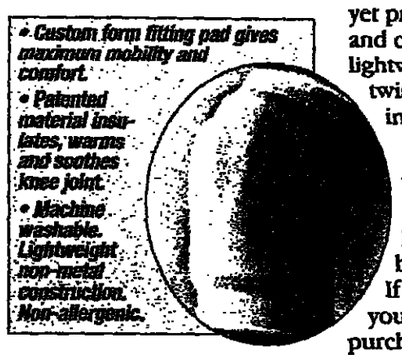
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THE LAWN OF YOUR DREAMS HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER

Whether starting your lawn from scratch or have unsightly bare patches, WONDERGREEN PLUS WITH FERTILISER can start to give you a lush green lawn that will look good all year round in as little as 5 days - irrespective of soil conditions, sun, drought, shade, heat or cold.

A BEAUTIFUL, LUXURIANT LAWN - A REALITY AT LAST

If your lawn suffers from unsightly brown, bald patches where only the weeds seem to thrive then WONDERGREEN PLUS is the answer. WONDERGREEN PLUS is a grass seed with its own fertiliser for prolific growth so even a complete novice gardener should have no problem growing a lawn to be proud of.

START A WONDERGREEN PLUS LAWN IN AS LITTLE AS 5 DAYS

A WONDERGREEN PLUS lawn couldn't be easier. Ground preparation is minimal. Simply rake over, sow WONDERGREEN PLUS rake over and water. The added fertiliser actually feeds the seed as it germinates thus eliminating the need for the lazy gardener to tend the new shoots.

A WONDERGREEN PLUS LAWN - RAPID RESULTS - LASTING RESULTS

In as little as 5 days, advanced WONDERGREEN PLUS grass seed will start to sprout to produce a thick, luxuriant lawn, virtually impenetrable to weeds and able to withstand extremes of temperature - HOT to COLD, direct sun and heat to shade, frost and snow. WONDERGREEN PLUS is resistant to prolonged periods of drought and even disease. Regular mowing helps produce a classic lawn with a velvety texture all year long.

Transformed This



Into this in about 3 weeks!

INTRODUCTORY OFFER FROM JUST
£7.95 + p&p
Normally £9.95

SUITABLE FOR ALL SOIL TYPES

WONDERGREEN PLUS thrives in all soil types - heavy clay to light and sandy. And unlike ordinary grass seed WONDERGREEN PLUS grass seed has special anti-mould treatment to prevent it rotting in the ground before germination has taken place.

TOLERANT TO MOST GARDEN ENEMIES - BIRDS - PETS - CHILDREN

Most gardens suffer from 'pests' of one kind or another. WONDERGREEN PLUS is 100% organic but has been specially treated to repel birds and stop them eating the seed before germination has taken place. Safe and non-toxic it is ideal for gardens that 'suffer' children and pets - a hardy mixture that will take just about anything that can be thrown at it.

NOT AVAILABLE IN SHOPS OR STORES

WONDERGREEN PLUS is not available in shops, DIY stores or garden centres. Only by mail order. Ordering is easy. You can call our 24 hour telephone ordering service or complete the coupon and post today. Please allow 14 days for delivery. Money back if not delighted.

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER

Order now and take advantage of these
SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICES
1 Pack - 500g covers 150sq.ft. £7.95 + p&p (Normally £9.95)
2 Packs - 1kg covers 300sq.ft. £13.95 + p&p (Normally £17.95)
4 Packs - 2kgs covers 600sq.ft. £24.95 + p&p (Normally £32.95)

Deliveries over 1kg. are by Parcel Force on your behalf unless you instruct us otherwise by calling 01789 470 055

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Please send me (tick box) ***WONDERGREEN PLUS***
❑ 1 Pack - 500g covers 150sq.ft. £7.95 + £1.95 p&p
❑ 2 Packs - 1kg covers 300sq.ft. £13.95 + £2.95 p&p
❑ 4 Packs - 2kgs covers 600sq.ft. £24.95 + £2.95 p&p
I enclose Cheque/PO. for £_____ or charge my *MasterCard/Visa/Delta/Switch Account.*
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Expiry Date _____ Signature _____
Switch Card Issue No. & Start Date _____
Name: Mr/Mrs/Ms _____
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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL HOUSEHOLDERS

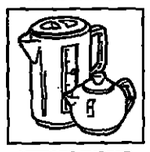
The benefits of softer water

without the use of costly chemicals, filters and salt.

Do you recognise the visual symptons of hardwater & limescale? The effects could result in the replacement of household appliances, plumbing and hot water cylinders.



HARD WATER & LIMESCALE have an adverse and detrimental effect on all households



KETTLES FURRED Coffee machines and ice machines also suffer from the effects of hard water and limescale.



SHOWERS Restricted water flow caused by limescale build up.



BATHS, BASINS & TOILETS · Unsightly scale and stains.

SHAMPOOS, SOAP, DETERGENT Don't lather as they should and scum is produced.

THE HIDDEN SYMPTOMS



APPLIANCES - HOT WATER CYLINDER WASHING MACHINES, DISHWASHERS, WATER HEATERS, IMMERSION HEATERS, HOT WATER HEATERS, HOT WATER PIPES.
Internal damage caused to pipes and water heaters and appliances by internal limescale encrustation.

REDUCES OPERATING EFFICIENCY, LIFE OF APPLIANCES AND INCREASES MAINTENANCE COSTS.

LOSS OF HEATING EFFICIENCY Just 3mm of scale can cause up to 25% loss in heating efficiency.

ALL THIS COULD RESULT IN THE NEED TO REPLACE PLUMBING AND HOT WATER CYLINDERS.



INSTALL A

Water King®

Electronic Water Softener

that retains healthy minerals and is scientifically proven to produce softer water

- REDUCES EXISTING LIMESCALE AND HELPS DESCALE YOUR PLUMBING.
- HELPS PREVENT FRESH DEPOSITS OF LIMESCALE FORMING.
- PROVIDES SOFTER WATER SO SOAPS, SHAMPOOS AND DETERGENTS LATHER BETTER - SCUM IS REDUCED
- REDUCES YOUR ENERGY BILLS
- EASY DIY INSTALLATION - NO MAINTENANCE REQUIRED
- REDUCES SCALE ON BATHS, SINKS AND LAVATORY BOWLS.
- REDUCES FURRING OF KETTLES AND SHOWER HEADS.
- SOFTER DRINKABLE WATER
- NO SEPARATE HARD WATER TAP
- LOW RUNNING COSTS - LESS THAN 2p PER DAY
- HEALTHY MINERALS RETAINED



SIZE 6" x 4" x 2"

LOW COST NATIONWIDE INSTALLATION AVAILABLE

OR EASY DIY
NO PLUMBING - ATTACHES TO PIPES, METAL OR PLASTIC

READ WHAT SATISFIED CUSTOMERS SAY ABOUT WATER-KING

Dear Sirs
At teatime the next day, my wife was astonished to find loose pieces of scale in the bottom of the kettle which within three to four days was virtually clear of limescale and has remained so. We know from experience that we are now getting softer water. The family's wash can be done with soapflakes instead of detergent ——Reg V. Ward, DORSET

Dear Sirs
We write to tell you how satisfied we are with the Water-King units installed at our hotel. The water is softer and we are delighted with the extremely low running costs. I would like to thank you for an excellent product ——CHIEF ENGINEER, HOLIDAY INN HOTEL, LONDON

Dear Sirs
After fitting the Water-King units into our hotel I am writing to express my delight with their performance ——GENERAL MANAGER, QUEENS HOTEL, SOUTHSEA

Dear Sirs
Already the kettle is de-furring. Thank you for a unit that is well priced, that works better than I thought possible and I would be happy to recommend you ——L.T.I, KENT

Dear Sirs
I give up! After 5 weeks, our heavily furred kettle is cleaner ——MR K, BATH

WATER-KING - supplied to HOTELS, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, NURSING HOMES, INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL

HEALTHY MINERALS RETAINED

The Minerals present in hard water are essential to humans and animals. Water-King is a fully computerised water softener that reduces existing limescale and helps prevent the formation of new scale WITHOUT THE USE OF CHEMICALS or SALTS AND WITHOUT REMOVING CALCIUM AND HEALTHY MINERALS FROM THE WATER. Studies have indicated that calcium in drinking water can be beneficial to the health of the nation.

WATER-KING REALLY WORKS

In fact, it is the only computerised electronic water treatment system that has been tested by independent laboratories and PROVEN TO PRODUCE SOFTER WATER.

TEST WATER-KING FOR 100 DAYS

WATER-KING ELECTRONIC WATER SOFTENERS Start at less than £100 and are likely to pay for themselves in no time.
Test a Water-King in your home for 100 days under the terms of our Money Back Guarantee.
5 YEARS MANUFACTURERS WARRANTY against faulty workmanship. Manufactured under a quality Management system registered to ISO9001 certificate number 95/5280.

OVER 35,000 IN USE WORLDWIDE

FREE WATER TESTING KIT

Our testing kit will quickly indicate whether you have hard water and limescale problems.
ACT NOW - HELP PROTECT YOUR HOME AGAINST HARD WATER AND LIMESCALE PROBLEMS.

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e.mail:SALES @ lifescience. co.uk http://www. lifescience. co.uk

Or write to : WATER-KING (Dept TW24) FREEPOST, OF2188, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4YU

WEEKEND COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Learning doesn't have to be a carry on



Sid James in *Carry On Dick*. Learn about highwaymen, poachers and rural crime, April 17-19, in Battle, East Sussex

APRIL 10-13

Easter multi-activity weekends in Snowdonia. With abseiling, climbing, white-water rafting and clay-pigeon shooting. From £200 for three nights. Also **Easter multi-activity weekend for singles in Abergavenny.** With canoeing. Both with Acorn Activities of Hereford (01432 830083). Price £250, inclusive.

A taste of gardening in Leicester. Activities include a visit to an EcoHouse for a study of organic gardening, a tour of Brooksby Agricultural College and the Botanic Gardens, and a visit to Barnsdale Gardens, home of the late TV gardener Geoff Hamilton. Leicester Promotions (0116-254 7400). From £210 per person.

Gliding. Soar over the Cotswolds in a two-seater glider with experts from the Bristol and Gloucester Gliding Club (01453 860342). Trial flights from £20.

Scottish and East Anglia cycling breaks. From Blairgowrie, Perthshire and Framlingham and Woodbridge in Suffolk with Anglia Cycling Holidays (01250 876100). Cycles, B&B accommodation and vegetarian meals available. From £75 for three days.

Easter getaway. At the Earnley Concourse, Chichester, West Sussex (01243 670392). Yoga, walking, swimming, croquet, musical evenings and line dancing. From £277 residential.

Easter walking in Constable country. From the Flatford Mill Studies Centre, East Bergholt, Essex (01206 298283). From £105 residential, £82 non-residential.

Easter landscape painting; Learning to paint with watercolours; Writing poetry; Drawing and design. Some of the many courses on offer during Easter at Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden, Bucks (01494 890296). From £69.

Family naturalist and bird weekend; Castles and strongholds near Shrewsbury; Sketching and painting. All this weekend with the Field Studies Council, Shrewsbury (01743 850380). Prices from £75-£105, inclusive.

Basic blacksmithing; Colour photography; Traditional drawing techniques. At West Dean College, Chichester, West Sussex (01243 811301). From £150 inclusive.

Paragliding. Weekends at Austwick, North Yorkshire, with Active Edge (01423 711900). Age 16-plus. Accommodation available. Price £65 for one day, £110 for two days.

APRIL 17-19

Working with willow. Making bird houses and bird homes at the Somerset Levels Centre, Borrowbridge, Somerset, with Working Willow (01963 370413). Price £135 for two days, inclusive.

CORBIS



Taking pictures on the Moon. Try a guide to the camcorder, April 24-26, in Higham Hall, Cumbria

Highwaymen, poachers and rural crime 1660-1860; Stumpwork and needlelace. At Pryke House, Battle, East Sussex (01424 772495). Price £68 residential, £58 non-residential.

Tracing family history; Speed appliqué methods. At Alston Hall Residential College, Preston (01772 784661). Prices from £70.

American line dancing; Talking with confidence. At Burton Manor College, South Wirral (0151-336 5172). Price £98 per course.

Wildlife watch for families; Gardening for wildlife; Otters and other riverside mammals. All weekend at the Flatford Mill Centre, East Bergholt, Essex (01206 298283). Prices from £85.

Wine appreciation; The industrial heritage of South Wales; Yoga; Music making for beginners. At various locations this weekend with H. F. Holidays (0181-905 9558). Prices from £124 to £194, depending on the activity and *accommodation required*.

Rise and fall of the Knights Templar; Batik textiles. At Maryland College, Woburn, Bedfordshire (01525 292901). From £99 per course.

Belly dancing. At Mountain Hall, Queensbury, West Yorkshire (01274 816258). Price per course £85 residential, £60 non-residential.

Basic china mending. At Mowbray School of Porcelain Restoration, Hatfield, Herts (01707 270158). Price £135.

Why pay more for your wines; Let's dance, a weekend for recorder players; Watercolour workshop; Alexander technique. All this weekend at the Old Rectory, Fittleworth, West Sussex (01798 865306). Price per course £114 residential, £90 non-residential.

Art and the Greeks; Geology of East Anglia; Books of Hours and songs of Courtly Love; Medieval mysteries. All weekend at the University of Cambridge (01954 210636). Price per course £120.

APRIL 24-26

Hang-gliding in the Peak District. From the Peak District Hang-Gliding Centre, Leek, Staffs (01538 382520). Britain's oldest BHPA approved hang-gliding centre. Students must be over 14. Courses from £35 per day.

Beginners' guide to the camcorder; Willow sculpture. Both this weekend at Higham Hall, Cumbria (017687 76276). Price per course £112.

Reading Latin; A jazz weekend. DH Lawrence and EM Forster; An introduction to world religions. This weekend at the University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall (01954 210636). Price per course £120.

Memoir writing; Garden sculpture; A George Gershwin celebration. All this weekend at the Wensum Lodge, King Street, Norwich (01603 66602). Price per course £84 inclusive.

Upstairs downstairs, life in an English country house; Buddhism and philosophy; Ancient Egyptian religion. All this weekend at Dillington House, Ilminster, Somerset (01460 55866). From £79.

How to be a travel writer; Beautiful Batik; Walking the Downs and the Weald. All this weekend at the Old Rectory, Fittleworth, Sussex (01798 865306). Prices from £114 residential, £97 non-residential.

Walking in spring. A weekend of guided spring walks, each eight miles long, at Chichester Harbour and the South Downs. Also **Calligraphy for fun** and **Painting and sketching.** All from Earnley Concourse, Chichester, West Sussex (01243 670392). Prices £149 residential, £103 non-residential.

Conservation weekends. In all parts of Britain with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (01491 839766). On the Jurassic Coast of Dorset, repairing the South West Coastal Path or fossil hunting. Price £100 inclusive.

Richard III — good or bad? At Ludlow, Shropshire, with the University of Birmingham (0121-414 5615). Price £129 inclusive.

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Nov 97(R), Dark Green metallic, 7k miles, ESR, remote central locking, alarm, immobiliser, CD, electric windows & mirrors, 6 mths manufacturers warranty. Immaculate.
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Auto Saloon 1994(L)
Maldives Blue Metallic, 5 spoke alloys, Silver leather, Aircon, PDC, Cruise Control, electric windows, electric seats, electric steel sunroof, FBMWSH. Above average mileage, hence only
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Evolution Cabriolet
97R, Techno Violet, Full Marble Leather, Air Conditioning, Rear Head Restraints. Nice Spec. 12k mls.
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328 Conv, 1996, 18k mls, white Evo lenssen, hard top, montreal blue, silver 18kr, BMW sport whls, best example £32k. 0171 383 7000/0468 861700(p).

328iA coupe, 96N, met black, ESR, sports seats, 42,000 miles, FSH. £20,500. 01483 894967.

PROBABLY THE 1st IN THE COUNTRY
BMW Z3 (MOTOR SPORT) ROADSTER
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88(F), Royal Blue metallic, Grey hide, cruise control, electric memory sports seats, usual extras, cherished plate, 65,000 miles, FSH. Excellent condition.
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Z3 Arctic Silver Comprehensive Specification Delivery Mileage No Premium required. Tel: 01483 544321 (Gloucestershire showroom) or 0831 390650.T

Z3M Roadster 3.2 Manual Metallic Blue. New in country, extra hard top, tracker, air conditioning, delivery mileage. Best offer secures. Tel: 0151 3367628.

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95M 750I A, LWB, TV, Great Spec, 65k	£35,995	96M 520i SE, A/C + More, 26k	£18,995
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97P 528I A SE, Great Spec, 8k	£32,995	95L 325i A SE, Lagoon, Biege Ltsr, A/C, 61k	£15,995
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96M 318i S Spec M3 Kit	49k	£17,995
96M 318i S Spec ESR Lth VNYL	49k	£17,995
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هكذا من الأصل

Let's roll out the Rolls-Royce red carpet for the Germans — their ownership of the marque will be a boon. Oh, but don't mention the Austin Seven

But isn't BMW British anyway?

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION

Peter Barnard

An acquaintance of mine who works in a bakery is not feeling too good this week. The thing is, he had always wanted a Rolls-Royce but is having second thoughts on account of the company being sold, subject to late counterbids and shareholder revolts, to BMW. Admittedly, my pal is at present some way down the car-ownership ladder — the last time I saw him he was driving an A-reg Ford Granada — but he has always been quite certain that one day he would drive a Roller (he already owns a garden roller, so that is a start).

There has always been something fascinating about the relationship between Rolls-Royce and the ordinary mortals who aspire to them, and I fear that relationship may die with the coming to Crewe of BMW. I am not much for nostalgia and have little room for sentimentality so I do not subscribe to the views of R-R diehards who will fight the BMW types on the beaches rather than have them in the boardroom at Crewe.

But it is a fact that Rolls-Royce does not attract the ugly envy that is often directed at BMW, Porsche, Ferrari and, to some extent, Jaguar. Most people rather admire Rolls-Royce owners, in part because the car is associated with royalty and aristocracy, two branches of the societal tree which we affect to despise while secretly admiring them.

The real target of abuse is the owner of the "Beemer": it has a get-rich-quick association that is not a product of the car itself but of some of the people who drive them. City youths start their preening displays of wealth with a red Porsche (to match their braces) and then graduate to a BMW after discovering that the words "understated" and "taste" often appear in the same sentence in style magazines. The photographs in those magazines tend to feature long-legged women with exquisite bone structure stepping out of BMWs.

In spite of all this, BMW retains a suspiciously flash air, which has led to a perception that it might in some way devalue the Rolls marque. I find that absurd: the German company owns a string of classy marques, and the recent history, especially at Rover Group in Britain, suggests that exclusivity is something that BMW worries about quite a lot. Indeed, one hears talk that the company has limited exports of its own cars to Britain in order to maintain that exclusivity, which is now slipping a little via the second-hand market.

In general BMW has been so clever in developing and refining its own image that damage to the image of Rolls-Royce is inconceivable. BMW's care on the marketing front has been such that I doubt that one person in 100 knows that if the company used its full name instead of its initials, people at parties would be forced to say they drove a car made by the Bavarian Motor Works (how very Crewe, come to think of it).

BMW has the money to maintain Rolls-Royce in the livery to which it has become accustomed. The new Roller, unveiled a couple of weeks back, has a BMW engine and there is nothing new in a Rolls having foreign bits buried beneath the livery: the old Rolls V8, although designed in the UK, borrowed some ideas from American engines and it had an automatic gearbox based on an original design by that well-known British firm, General Motors. Nor is the traffic all one way: the earliest BMW was called a Dixi and it was based on that British icon, the Austin Seven.

So I shall not be standing on the white cliffs of Dover attempting to repel the forces of BMW as they cross the Channel to run Rolls-Royce. I do not think that awful German sausages will be fed to a Crewe workforce obliged to don lederhosen. I do think that BMW will be good for Rolls. I even think that BMW will be good for my baker pal's chances of owning a Rolls, because if production is increased at Crewe, as seems likely, there will be more Rollers in the second-hand market, and more means cheaper.

That in turn is good news for me, for I am planning to market a bumper-sticker for my friend the baker, and all the other people who will shortly find themselves in possession of a Rolls sailing under a new flag. It carries the egalitarian message: "My grandfather was an Austin Seven."



World-beater from the farmyard hits 50


Land Rover Fifty 50 Challenge volunteers Dominic Smith, Michelle Fellowes and Andy Rikunenko break for tea on their first training exercise

Alan Copps on a globe-trotting anniversary challenge to prove the new Freelander worthy of its heritage

Going trekking through sticky mud carrying a full five-gallon water bottle and ferreting through soggy grass for aluminium disc-shaped clues may seem an odd way to celebrate the birthday of a vehicle. But that's one way Julie Chalmers spends weekends these days.

For Julie is one of a team of Land Rover employees who have volunteered for the Fifty 50 Challenge, an against-the-clock charity expedition through 50 countries in 50 days to mark the half-century of a vehicle that became a lifestyle long before marketing men hijacked the word.

The Land Rover has probably spawned more imitations than any other vehicle, yet one of the aims of the Fifty 50 Challenge is to prove that when it comes to the toughest expeditions, the original product still reigns supreme, even in its latest form, the Freelander, designed to combine the qualities of the new-generation "fun off-roader" with the renowned durability of its ancestors.

The trip, which starts in August, will take three Freelanders on a relay from North Cape in Norway to Cape Town in South Africa, via Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Although it has the full backing of the Rover board, the expedition has to be self-supporting and the volunteers are doing their planning, training and sponsorship-seeking in their own time.

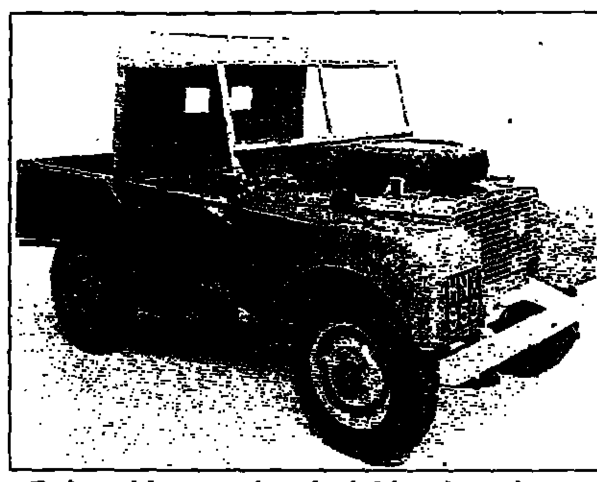
The mud-plugging on foot was part of the first training weekend at Eastnor Castle in Herefordshire. "The idea was to test what we would have done if we had run out of water in the middle of nowhere. The clues on the discs were hidden at certain features marked on a map," says Julie.

The teams come from many different areas of the company and most have never worked together before. Volunteer Andy Rikunenko, says: "In one exercise the volunteers are blindfolded and given a rope, which they have to form a square with. It's an excellent test of communication, logic and working together."

The Fifty 50 Challenge is just one of a series of events marking the anniversary. The last weekend of April will see a huge gathering of Land Rovers at Eastnor and a heritage run with 150 vehicles around Solihull, where the cars are made. Rover dealers throughout the world are also being asked to help "Search for a legend", a quest to find the Land Rover with the most interesting history from each country.

● *For details of the Fifty 50 Challenge contact Andy Rikunenko at Land Rover, Lode Lane, Solihull, West Midlands, B92 8NW.*

Lord Montagu charts the Land Rover's rise to fortune from its austere, muddy birthplace


Early models' suspensions shook drivers into going easy

The Land Rover was born on a farm in the grim postwar days when Attlee's Government was exhorting the motor industry to "export or die".

Maurice Wilks, who ran Rover with his brother Spencer, owned a farm on the Isle of Anglesey and bought a wartime Jeep as an agricultural workhorse. Finding that it was always breaking down, he became convinced that Rover could do better.

Powered by a Rover car engine, the Land Rover was panelled in aluminium, which, apart from its light weight and corrosion resistance, was not subject to metal rationing. In 1947, prototype Land Rovers were tested on farmland adjoining the Rover factory at Solihull, not only demonstrating extraordinary cross-country capabilities, but driving threshing machines through a power take-off, carrying milk churns on trailers and tilling fields.

The Land Rover made its first public appearance at the Amsterdam Motor Show in April 1948, and went into production at Solihull the following July, just 18 months after the Wilks brothers had decided on the project. It proved an immediate success, and orders poured in from all over the world.

Former Land Rover chief engineer Tom Barton, 82, says: "The Land Rover's success I put down to one thing, and that was its durability, which was controlled by the discomfort of the driver.

"The first cars only had 4in of wheel travel so if you went cross-country too fast you did more damage to the driver than you did to the vehicle, so drivers always slowed down and the vehicle lasted longer.

"We had to keep the flat tops of the front wings because soldiers in the armies we sold Land Rovers to wanted a flat surface to make their teas and fry their breakfast on.

"And we kept the split front windscreen for so long because it was cheaper and easier to ship replacement half-screens round the world than a big screen in one part."

The Land Rover went from strength to strength: 24,000 were sold in the first two years, earning £5 million in foreign currency.

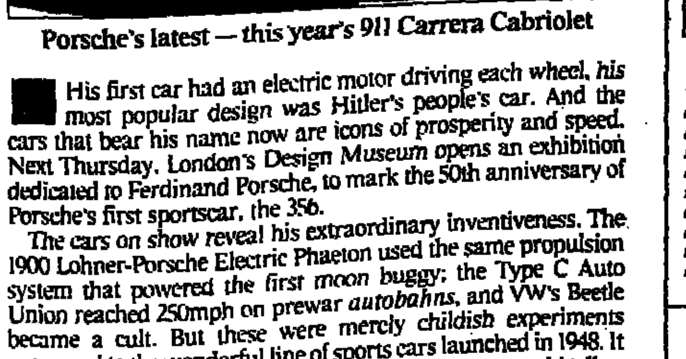
Changes to the vehicle have always been carefully considered improvements to a specification that was pretty well right from the start. The engine was uprated from 1.6 litres to 2 litres in 1952, the wheelbases of both regular and long-wheelbase models grew in 1954 and a 2-litre diesel appeared in 1957.

By 1959 Land-Rover production had reached the quarter-million mark. It passed 500,000 in 1966, when a 2.6-litre six-cylinder petrol-engined version was added to the range. Two million have now been built, all recognisably descended from that brilliant original concept.

In 1975 a V8 engine was fitted to military Land Rovers and became available in civilian versions in 1979. But despite improvements, the Land Rover was under increasing pressure from worldwide competition, although Range Rover production was increasing.

In 1988, the gap between Land Rover and Range Rover was plugged by the mid-priced Discovery range, while the basic Land Rover 90/110 models were renamed Defender, and a turbo-diesel option became available. A new-look Range-Rover appeared in 1994, the year that Rover was sold to BMW.

PORSCHE: A GENIUS CELEBRATED



Porsche's latest — this year's 911 Carrera Cabriolet

His first car had an electric motor driving each wheel, his most popular design was Hitler's people's car. And the cars that bear his name now are icons of prosperity and speed. Next Thursday, London's Design Museum opens an exhibition dedicated to Ferdinand Porsche, to mark the 50th anniversary of Porsche's first sportscar, the 356.

The cars on show reveal his extraordinary inventiveness. The 1900 Lohner-Porsche Electric Phaeton used the same propulsion system that powered the first moon buggy; the Type C Auto Union reached 250mph on prewar autobahns, and VW's Beetle became a cult. But these were merely childish experiments compared to the wonderful line of sportscars launched in 1948. It is astonishing that an exhibition devoted to one man could tell so much about automotive history. Information: 0171-378 6055.

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NB: Entrant should be the director/senior manager responsible for the company's car fleet
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Nature of business: .... Number of employees: .... Number of company cars: ....

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2					
3					
4	(reserve)				

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You must ensure that entrant and nominated drivers are available for both first and second choice dates and for the final at Silverstone on Friday, 26 June 1998. Initial qualification may be by telephone questionnaire. Entrants and drivers will be contacted on an individual basis.

• **Competition rules**

The closing date for entries is 8 April 1998. Drivers must be 24 years of age and over to enter. Only corporate entries will be accepted. Drivers must be nominated [illegible] for the company car fleet. Drivers must be nominated in teams of three. The entrant may also nominate himself/herself as part of the team. Companies can [illegible] company car or vehicle as part of their remuneration package. Qualification for the team/company award will be dependent upon a written test, to be completed [illegible]. Employees of Lease Plan, DriveTech, Nissan, The Silverstone Driving Centre and News International are not permitted to enter. In the spirit of the competition, competitors [illegible] specialist organisations such as driver training companies, any employees of vehicle leasing and contract hire companies, any person holding an Advanced Driving [illegible] the like are not permitted to enter. A place in the regional heats will be confirmed in writing, at least ten days prior to the heat. In the event of [illegible] driver telephone questionnaire. If the team does not qualify, the entrant will be informed in writing prior to the heat. Feedback on each driver [illegible] upon at the regional heat should one of the first three drivers be unable to compete. In the event of a finalist not being able to compete in the [illegible] in their place. The prize for the winner will be a special trip for two to the Italian Grand Prix. The team/company prize will be a driver [illegible] months. Cash alternatives are not available. A list of winners at each heat and at the final is available from Lease Plan upon request. The Judge's decision is final.

Once you have completed this form, fax it back to Lease Plan on 01753 620676 or post to Marketing Dept, Lease Plan, Thames Side, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 1TY. For further information call Lease Plan on 01753 797284

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984 AUG	8536 BY	DKE 803	EMJ 750	FPE 603	356 GXP	JCY 449					P3 PER	RDR 240	7095 RW	SXG 454	TPN 926	VOO 434	WVF 52
552 AUN	753 BYA	914 DKP	227 EMY	33 FPF	739 GXT	JD 5431	KKR 177	LPN 487	8851 MU	NRY 729	PES 872	818 RDV	RXV 228	SXM 846	TPO 900	VOU 998	WVN 487
30 AV	38 BYB	DL 9815	ENA 42D	FRJ 270	887 GXU	JDW 1E	KKU 8	51 LR	MUF 861	NSU 194	PEW 803	REC 7Y	RYB 385	SXO 628	TR 6918	VPA 72	317 WVO
782 AVJ	BYN 563	261 DLV	25 ENK	FPO 486	267 GYU	JEU 365	KMM 418	LRN 37	37 MUO	NSV 741	6118 PF	REF 8X	RYC 553	171 SYB	TR 952	845 VPC	1540 WW
365 AVO	525 CAY	DLX 681	722 ENN	FPW 972	448 GYW	JFC 688	KND 588	LSG 8X	8106 MV	NTK 52	PF 5062	RFD 197	RYJ 882	948 SYC	TRG 395	709 VPE	26 WWC
4865 AW	76 CBE	28 DN	ENP 88	H11 FRA	881 GZ	JGB 11Y	KNR 873	LSP 32	MVF 120	390 NTM	4244 PF	RFN 183	18 SA	6 SYD	804 TRO	472 VPG	WWC 530
AWH 111	60 CC	DNG 935	777 ENP	FSJ 652	55 HA	502 JGT	KO 5778	LSP 8P	MVV 662	M111 NTS	PFD 47	RFR 897	SAL 562R	SYD 858	745 TRR	852 VPH	2 WWL
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Have a flutter on the trot

Monte Carlo · 29

THE TIMES
TRAVEL

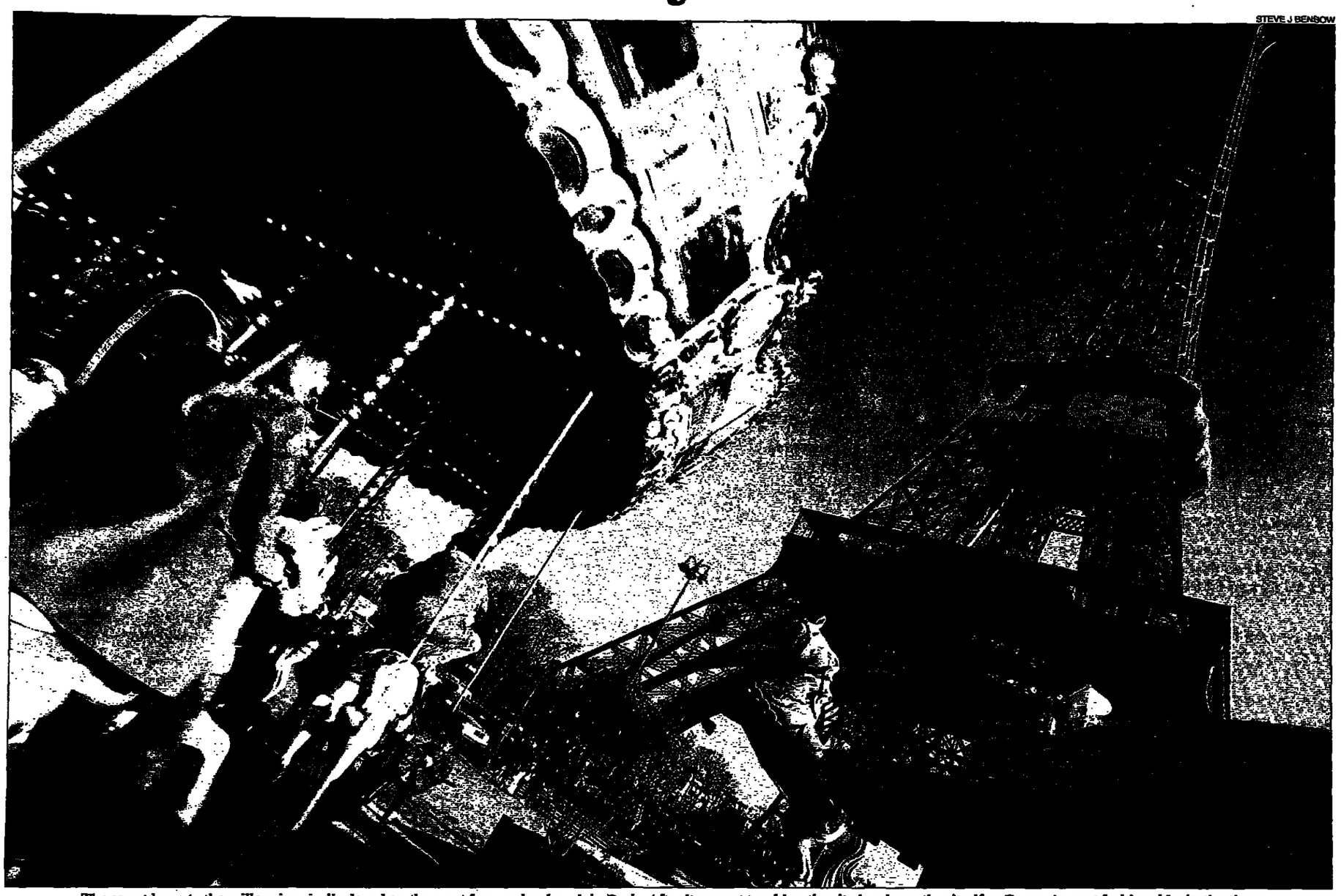
Journey of a child's lifetime

Africa · 31



A roundabout way to see Paris

To make the most of the city, follow **Joanna Hunter** off the beaten tourist track



STEVE J BENSOW

The countdown to the millennium is displayed on the most famous landmark in Paris. After its recent troubles, the city is reinventing itself as Europe's most fashionable destination

"And it's all over! England has won the World Cup for the first time in 32 years ..." That may be the outcome of this summer's festival of football in France, but there were no fanfares last week as we walked up the corridor to the pitch — like all Parisian grass, you are not meant to walk on it — which will host the 1998 World Cup final. Instead of 80,000 cheering ticket-holders, we were greeted by one man languidly mowing.

Even that did not diminish our excitement. The others in my group — all French — radiated civic pride at the gigantic, futuristic Stade de France. I have never been much of a footie fan but now I, too, must have a ticket. That will not be easy and I may have to settle for the £10 tour behind the scenes.

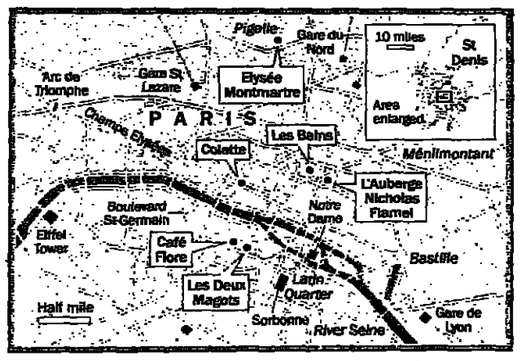
Parisians are glad of an excuse for civic pride. Economic gloom, unemployment, the terrorist threats that are a constant reminder of the 1995 Métro bombings, the Gallic tendency to love a good strike — Paris was almost throttled by demonstrating taxi drivers, firemen and SNCF buffet caterers last month — have all taken their toll on the city's self-esteem. Parisians seem to prefer to abandon their city to the tourists — more than 8 million visitors last year — who are turning it into a cultural theme park.

It is not just the stadium that the French will be showing off this summer: footballers and models go hand in hand and, sure enough, 11 models sporting Yves Saint Laurent's latest collection will be doing a lap of honour after the final game. The Rolling Stones will be performing as part of a cultural programme — even Cocteau and French feminist Kristeva get a look in.

During the past three years I have visited Paris as a tour guide, shepherding groups of 40 American high school students past the main attractions as fast as I could make them run. I developed an expert knowledge of strategic lavatories and cut-price baguettes close to the monuments. But famous as the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame and the Louvre are, visitors who want to get a real feel for Paris must abandon the tourist track.

The old saying "*Sur la rive gauche on pense, sur la rive droite on dépense*" (on the left bank you think, on the right bank you spend), is long out of date. The Champs-Elysées, designed by Haussmann to be the ultimate chic right-bank address, and the Latin quarter, traditionally home to the Sorbonne and fledgeling revolutionaries on the left, used to be polar opposites: both are now tourist traps with overpriced restaurants and tacky souvenir shops.

Not far from the Latin quarter, St-Germain is in a state of flux: Les Deux Magots and Café de Flore, where Hemingway and Sartre hung out, now rub shoulders with Cartier, Louis Vuitton and Armani — if Damien Hirst were to open a restaurant in Paris, it would be here.



Café de Flore does hold a philosophy night — Café des Philosophes — on the first Wednesday of every month, but serious thinking has moved elsewhere: Café Mecano, in the increasingly hip Ménilmontant area, is the alternative venue for Café des Philosophes, held on the third Wednesday of every month. Also on the right bank on a Wednesday night, media darlings known as Les Perpendiculaires discuss their horror of the Internet at Les Marronniers café in the Marais.

The bohemians have long deserted St-Germain and sought refuge in the outskirts of the city. In the east near Père Lachaise cemetery, Ménilmontant has taken over from Bastille, attracting an international crowd in the bars and cafés. Members of Air and Daft Punk — French bands of international renown — and designer Jean-Paul Gaultier now live in the formerly seedy Pigalle area.

CITIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Paris is not just looking inward. Once again it is attracting foreign talent. Fashion darlings Alexander McQueen at Givenchy, Stella McCartney at Chloé and Jeremy Scott at Vuitton have followed John Galliano to make Paris their base. Isabella Blow, Britain's *grande dame* of fashion and style editor of *The Sunday Times*, is also moving. "Paris is like a little jewel," she said. "Life is more relaxed and there are lots of artists and photographers. You can really indulge your senses in Paris, there's always something beautiful to look at or delicious things to eat."

Shopping in Paris has taken a turn for the better. A new attraction is Colette, the designer store which opened last year on the prestigious Rue St-Honoré. Subtitled "style-designartfood", Colette offers a "lifestyle" choice — everything from skirts to screwdrivers — and the stock changes every week.

The secret appears to be that it is open to all and everything: upstairs is an art space, and in the basement is a minimalist but friendly water-bar/restaurant with 65 different brands of mineral water. ("You mean you can't tell the difference between Rozana and Tipperary water?" I overheard one fashionable creature say to another.) The food is traditional with a modern slant — foie gras and croque monsieur both feature and, at Fr65 and Fr40 respectively, are not as expensive as you might expect.

A feeling of culinary superiority is even more French than farmers' strikes, and the capital does offer some evidence that its cuisine is moving with the times. The 15th-century Auberge Nicholas Flamel is an example of traditional style revamped from within. Its owner, Monsieur Natan, a club and restaurant promoter and a former pop star, mingles with his customers. The Louis XIV furniture and Keith Haring-esque wall decorations convey an antique charm without being fussy.

M Natan is buddies with the in-crowd and often helps his customers get into nearby clubs. One, just a stone's throw away, is Les Bains Douche, designed by Philippe Starck and on-and-off haunt of the beautiful for 20 years.

If you are on a serious celebrity hunt, Hôtel Costes on Rue St-Honoré has become the place to stay — although the food is average and the service appalling, but the decor is stylish and so is the clientele — I spotted Helena Christensen and Vidal Sassoon (although not together).

David Guetta, co-owner of Les Bains and the man behind Scream — a new club night at the ultra-hip Elysée Montmartre which he hopes will put the "gay" back into Paris — is certain things are on the move: "In London or New York you have VIP rooms that are closed off, but in Paris it's all mixed: you have lots of models and stars here."

It is not liberté, égalité et fraternité, of course. When Parisians say "everyone" they still mean "everyone who is anyone", and the same applies to door policies. If you are weighed down with cash, try kitting yourself out on Avenue Montaigne and you might make it past the door.

The rest of us need not despair. Even if you are not "looké", as the hyper-trendy beautiful young are known, Paris has plenty to offer. Some things never change: the old man with a baguette stashed under his arm, the lovers strolling along the banks of the Seine — and the green-clad knights on their motorised pooper-scoopers fighting the ever-present reminders of the French obsession with dogs. Parisians are philosophical: if you step in it with your left foot it is good luck. There is no truth in the rumour that members of the French football team have started dipping their toes in already.

PARIS FACT FILE

■ Getting there: Joanna Hunter travelled with Paris Travel Service (01992 456025). Two nights' B&B at the Hotel Terass in Montmartre is from £260 per person, including return travel with Eurostar and complimentary river cruise.

■ Hints for visitors: hotel availability during the World Cup is limited, but Parisians go on holiday in August, so the city is less crowded. And £1 once again buys Fr10.
Stade de France (RER: St Denis/Stade de France) offers guided tours (Fr90) at 10am, midday and 2pm (in French only): call 00 331 5593 0045 or the St Denis tourist office (15587 0870).

■ Cafés and restaurants: Les Deux Magots, 6 Pl St-Germain-des-Près (14548 5525); Café de Flore, 172 Bd St-Germain (14548 5526); Café Mecano, 99 Rue Oberkampf (14095 0567); Les Marronniers, 18 Rue des Archives (14027 8772); L'Auberge Nicholas Flamel, 51 rue de Montmorency (14271 7778); Hôtel Costes, 239 Rue St-Honoré (14244 5000).

■ Clubs: Les Bains Douches, 7 Rue du Bourg-l'Abbe (14887 0180), open daily 11.30pm-6am, admission Fr100; Elysées Montmartre, 72 Bd Rocheouart (14492 4542), open Sat 11pm-5am, admission Fr80-100.

■ Shopping: Colette, 213 Rue St Honoré (14286 9103).

■ Reading: *Time Out Guide: Eating & Drinking in Paris* (£3.50/Fr35); *Eyewitness Travel Guides: Paris* (£14.99). For weekly information on nightlife: *Nova* (Fr10).

■ Information: French Tourist Board (0891 244123, premium rates).

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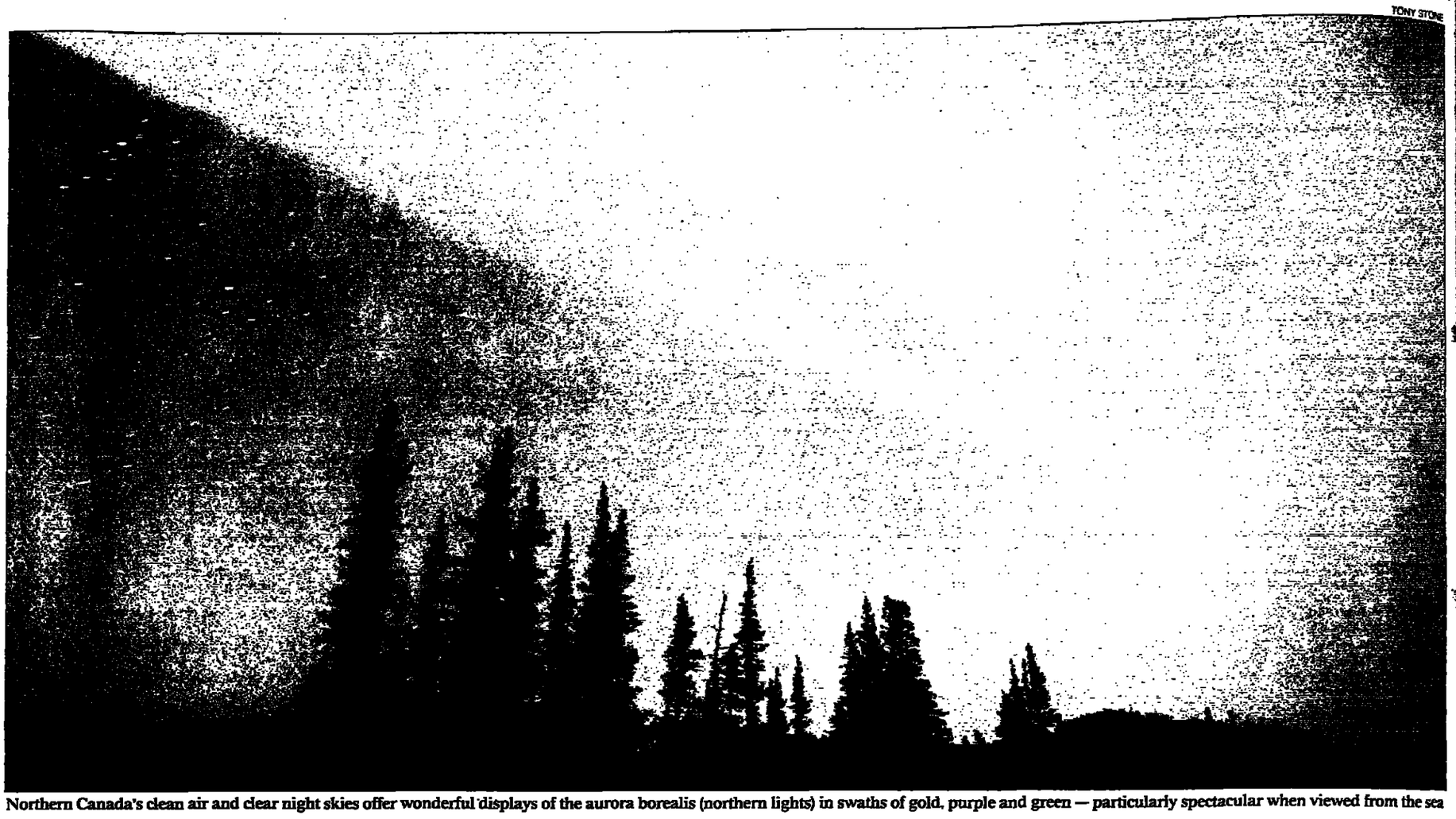
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Rendezvous under the northern lights



Robin Neillands was captivated by the lonely beauty of the Labrador coast



TONY STONE

Northern Canada's clean air and clear night skies offer wonderful displays of the aurora borealis (northern lights) in swaths of gold, purple and green — particularly spectacular when viewed from the sea

It is difficult to go on a cruise when you cannot find your ship. I had flown to St John's, a small port in Newfoundland in northeast Canada, to fly on to St Anthony, another small port, where I planned to join the MS *Northern Ranger* for a cruise along the Labrador coast. The problem was that on the day of my departure a fog descended on St Anthony and all the flights were suspended.

I had to wait a day before finally — even though the visibility was still bad — catching a two-engined aircraft onwards: at this stage I was still in time, or so I thought, to meet the ship before it departed.

The flight proved to be a rather hair-raising experience. By the time we flew into St Anthony the fog had thickened and we landed in what looked like a thick cloud.

I was glad to be alive, but not so glad when I discovered that my itinerary was incorrect and the *Northern Ranger* had sailed 12 hours earlier. I was stranded. The fog was now so bad that the airport had been closed: there was no way I could fly on to meet the ship at its next port of call.

All I could do was wait. I stayed at the airport — where I was soon dubbed the Lone Limey — and bugged the Canadian Coastguard people until they located the ship by short-wave radio and arranged a rendezvous for the next day.

"Well, it's not the end of the world," I thought. But it got worse. I missed the rendezvous and during the next two days — in a desperate wild goose chase — flew to Red Bay (where I missed the ship by half an hour) and then to Indian Tickle, Black Tickle and Snug Harbour (each time failing to find the elusive vessel). It was getting costly: £300 for accommodation in motels, food and flights.

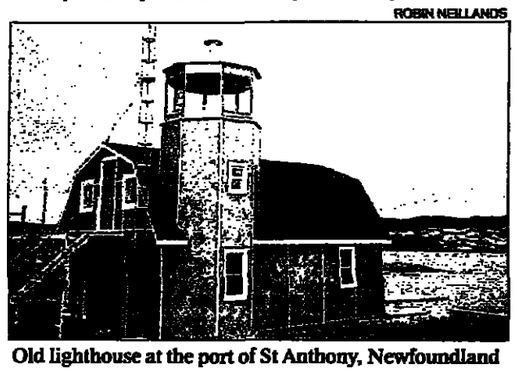
Just as I was about to give up, I reached a small port called Cartwright where the *Northern Ranger* was due at midnight. Exhausted, I rested in the dock controller's office and finally managed to board the elusive vessel.

Cruising along the Labrador coast — as I can now testify — takes a lot of patience and spare time. But it is worth it. Not only is there a sense of adventure but the scenery, the wildlife and absence of people make it a wonderful place to relax and forget your worries.

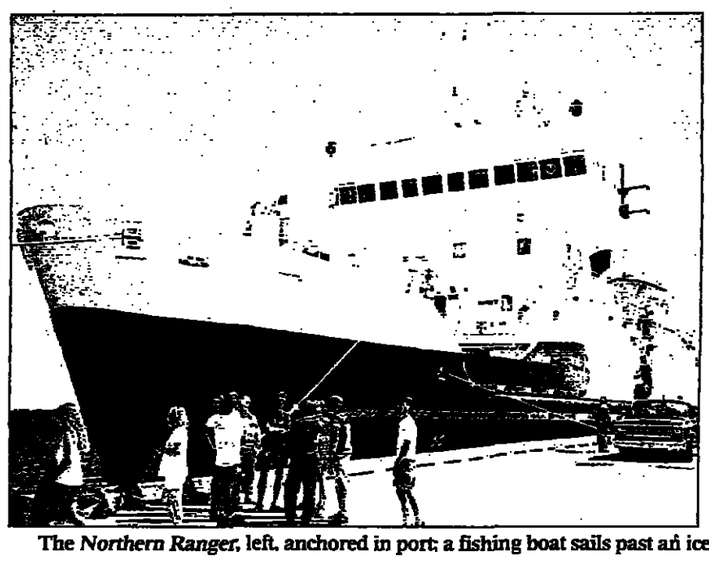
On board the *Northern Ranger* — the size of an Isle of Wight ferry with a small cafeteria, a lounge (no bar) and a few two and four-bedcabins — we passed icebergs that looked like white ghosts, humpbacked and minke whales that blew by the bows, puffins and eagles as well as caribou which scampered over rocky headlands.

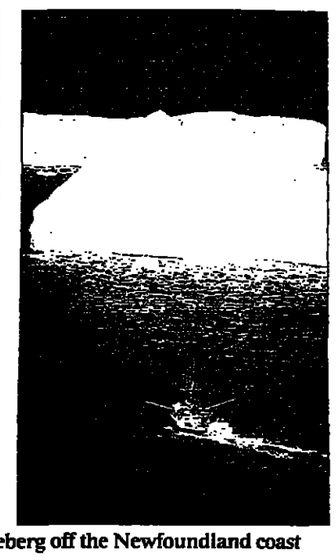
When the explorer Jacques Cartier visited the Labrador coast in the 1500s he described it as "the land God gave to Cain". It certainly looks bleak in bad weather, but when the sun comes out Labrador becomes a land of rare beauty, unspoilt and unpolluted — perfect for anyone who likes remote and lonely places.

ROBIN NEILLANDS



Old lighthouse at the port of St Anthony, Newfoundland





The *Northern Ranger*, left, anchored in port; a fishing boat sails past an iceberg off the Newfoundland coast

On board, I would sleep until dawn in my small, basic cabin (there were communal showers), awaking to spectacular sunrises. As we progressed north, sunset and sunrise became my favourite times on deck — the clear air seemed to bring out fantastic colours and light. The aurora borealis (northern lights) was also superb, coming on after dark to flicker across the heavens in swaths of gold, purple and green.

Whales and icebergs appeared every day and the ship often pulled into small ports, where the passengers were mustered by Shana, our cruise director, for a brief trip ashore, either on foot or in the local school bus.

Everyone went on these excursions to see old Inuit settlements or abandoned mission churches or the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. We visited old whaling stations, lonely lighthouses, fur trading huts, nature reserves, even the occasional museum. Sometimes there was evening entertainment when local songs, largely lamenting the decline of cod or the joys of "squid-jiggling" (a method of fishing cod using squid as bait) were bellowed out in the passenger lounge. The cruise was certainly never dull.

Camaraderie was established in no time and I was soon on first-name terms with the other passengers (about 40 on board at any one time) and crew. Most of the passengers were retired folk from the United States or the big cities of Canada but there was also a party of young German canoeists and a group of geologists, as well as Inuit and Indians travelling between ports. (The *Northern Ranger*'s primary purpose is to provide transportation for the Labrador communities.)

So we cruised on contentedly to Rigolet and up the long inlet to Goose Bay, a metropolis in these parts with its vast Royal Canadian Air Force base. Then we went back out to sea and north to the Ragged Islands and Adlavic settlement.

Finally, after weaving through a network of offshore islands, we arrived at the port of Nain (pop: 1,000), where I was due to catch my flight back to St Anthony. By then I did not want to leave and stayed on board until departure time and waited to watch the little ship sail away.

Getting back by air took only about two hours (this time without fog delays), but it was not the same thing at all . . . it seemed just a bit too easy.

We saw old Inuit colonies, empty churches, whaling stations and fur trading huts





Fish supper for a puffin

LABRADOR FACT FILE

- Robin Neillands travelled with the Canadian Tourism Commission and Canadian Pacific Hotels.
- Getting there: Experience Holidays (01323 416699) has a two-week trip in August for £2,050 including a 12-night cruise on the *Northern Ranger*, return flights, internal flights, all meals and accommodation at a motor inn before the cruise.
- All Canada Travel & Holidays (01502 585825) tailor-makes cruises on the *Northern Ranger* and has package trips to mainland Newfoundland. Air Canada (0990 247226) has flights from Heathrow to St John's from £513 until the end of June.
- Where to stay: Supranational Hotels (0500 303030), which handles reservations for Canadian Pacific Hotels, has single and double rooms for £100.60 to £138.50 at the four-star Newfoundland Hotel in St John's (room only).
- Tips: Take plenty of film (not easy to find in the small ports), also mosquito repellent, high-factor suncream, lip salve and some warm clothing (it can get chilly, especially after dark). Rain gear is also useful, as well as comfortable shoes for shore excursions. Smart clothing is not required.
- Reading: *The Shipping News* by E. Annie Proulx (Fourth Estate, £6.99), Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about Newfoundland; *Glass Top Sails* by Patrick Kavanagh (Penguin, £16.99), a novel based in Newfoundland; *Canada* (Lonely Planet, £14.99) has a section on Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Best time to go: June, July and August are the warmest months (normally 10-21C). Can be very cold at other times.
- Further information: Visit Canada Centre (0891 715000, a premium-rate line).

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I had a flutter — and lost my shirt

Tom Chesshyre will not be betting on today's Grand National — he lost all his money in Monte Carlo



GEORGE SELWYN

Trotting races are often the highlight of race meetings in continental Europe, but French racegoers are more restrained than the British — there's not much shouting or waving

It was not the most auspicious start to the trip. We were departing on Friday the 13th and the check-in computers had broken down at Heathrow's Terminal One. For the 50-odd gamblers travelling to Monte Carlo for a weekend's racing, it was a bad omen. "We're going to need a change of luck on the racetrack," said Peter Grey, a teacher.

The group was travelling with Horse Racing Abroad, a tour operator that has been specialising in racing holidays since 1975; it sends more than 3,000 people a year to events as far afield as Paris, Bali, Barbados, Dubai and Toronto. The three-night Monte Carlo trip included two visits to a racecourse at Cagnes-sur-Mer (20 miles west along the French Riviera from Monaco) and had the added gambling attraction of the principality's swish casinos. A perfect break for those who fancy a flutter.

Monte Carlo's high-rollers were everywhere as we took a stroll before the first night's trip to watch a floodlit trotting meeting. Fur coats (I had never seen so many), Gucci handbags, Armani suits and Ray-Bans filled the pavements. Bright yellow Ferraris, enormous Rolls-Royces and sparkling Porsches pulled up outside the Hôtel de Paris — even the taxis were Mercedes. The designer shops — Cartier, Hermès, Chanel, Christian Dior — were buzzing with winnings being spent on silk shirts, diamonds and gold earrings.

The whole place seemed to smell of money. I began to daydream: a bit of luck on the horses, followed by a good run in the hotel casino, and who knew what might happen? Perhaps I would be swanning about in a sharp suit by the end of the weekend?

At the Cagnes-sur-Mer track that evening, I teamed up with our disparate group, who ranged in occupation from a self-employed painter and decorator to the chief executive of a multinational company. But we were all united by a common pursuit: to beat the odds.

Dave Harvey, manager of a bookmaker's in Reading, and his friend Chris Smith, a wine trader, appeared the canniest gamblers of the lot. They had been racing in Monte Carlo for ten out of the past 11 years; Dave said he had won £12,000 on betting last year and Chris was also a regular winner.

Chris, a tall man with a knowing glint in his eye, handed out cigars as we studied the first race in the dingy grandstand bar. I singled out a horse called Gift. "Never look a gift horse in the mouth," I said.

"You can on this occasion," said Chris. "It hasn't got a chance."

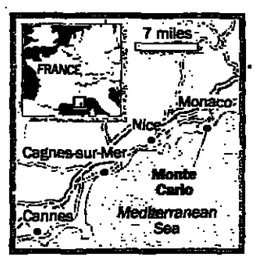
After being interrupted by a Frenchman with a moustache who wanted to inspect Dave's binoculars ("With these you *can see zee-colour of zee osses'* eyes," he commented, clearly impressed), we backed a horse called Gasly de Bourbon, which had won its last race. To place a bet, you visit kiosks and read out the number of the horse you want to win and how much you want to wager; *gagnant* is "to win", *à cheval* is "each way" and *jumelé* is "straight forecast". So a Fr20 bet on the No 3 horse to win would be: "*Le trois. Gagnant. Vingt francs.*"

We found a good position in the busy stands. A red moon hung low over the misty Mediterranean on the far side of the well-lit track. The horses — harnessed to chariots manned by comical-looking, pot-bellied jockeys (weight helps on the corners) — came past in a swirl of sand. The rules of trotting are that the diagonally opposite legs of the horse must come down together; this gives the horse an upright posture and means it travels much more slowly than when galloping — which looks odd compared to traditional flat racing.

Unfortunately, Gasly de Bourbon trailed in behind the winner and our bad luck continued for a further three races before Egal Talent and then Houston de Play won for us. "*Allez, mon cocker!*" boomed Dave as they crossed the line — his French version of "Go on, my cocker!", a favourite cry of racegoers in Britain.

We celebrated with jambon baguettes from the bar; others opted for a three-course meal in the panoramic restaurant at the top of the grandstand.

I ended the evening £7 up — not bad, but hardly the fortune of which I had been dreaming. When we returned to Monte Carlo I decided to give the roulette tables a miss. Like others on the trip, I conserved



my cash for the next day's races. Perhaps if I had a few wins tomorrow I could then have a proper go at the casino.

Needless to say, the plan did not work. The sun may have shone on Saturday on Cagnes-sur-Mer and the white yachts on the Mediterranean, but not on my gambling efforts. I ended the day £30 down.

The closest I came to a win was when I almost bet on a horse called Freak Out, ridden by a jockey called A. Junk. "You can't bet on rubbish," joked Chris. For some reason, I took his advice and it promptly won at the longest odds of the day: 15-1. This was hard to take and I spent several minutes in numbed silence. One member of our group, I later painfully heard, had collected £1,000 after betting on it by mistake — some people have all the luck.

I was not the only one to lose. Things were also going badly for Tamara Rush-Kellett, 26, an investment banking analyst. "I may have lost, but I've thoroughly enjoyed it anyway," she said bravely. "It's been fun to go racing in another country and see how things are done, although I've got to admit this racecourse doesn't have as much atmosphere as those in Britain. There's not as much shouting and arm-waving — the French seem to treat racing more as a social occasion."

In the stands another British gambler threw away a losing ticket in disgust. A tough East Ender with knuckle tattoos reading "Love" and "Hate", even he had a smile. "We haven't had many wins," he croaked. "But it's good just being here in the south of France, innit?"

Things got increasingly desperate. A Frenchman with a scraggly grey ponytail began collecting discarded betting tickets from the floor of the grandstand bar, hoping to find a mislaid winner. Although not quite reduced to that level, most of us knew how he felt.

The racing over, hopes of making a killing turned to Monte Carlo's casinos. That evening — after dining in a cheap and cheerful Italian restaurant — we visited roulette tables at our hotel, the Loews, which is above the long tunnel used by Formula One cars in the Monaco Grand Prix. Having pushed through a scrum of Italians watching the action on the cheapest table (£1 a go), I bought £10 worth and scattered the chips. Three spins later it was all over — without success. Catherine Fry, one of Horse Racing Abroad's tour reps, had joined me and fared the same. "Oh well," she said ruefully, "we can't guarantee wins on our holidays."

My dreams of sharp suits now long gone, we visited Monte Carlo's main casino — just off the Place du Casino — to watch the high-rollers in action. Entry was £5 but well worth it. The chandeliers, gilded edgings, sculptures and frescoes of angels created a perfect James Bond setting. You could just imagine Roger Moore in his white dinner jacket raising an eyebrow as his number came up *again*.

Two members of our group were so seduced by it all that they cashed in £100 each. After ten minutes they were both broke. Even worse, on the very next spin, the number they had been betting on (28) came up. "I can't bear to watch," said a despondent Matthew Ball, 27, an insurance broker. He would have won £175 on a £5 chip.

Most of us had had enough of gambling by the final day of the trip. A coach journey to Cannes had been arranged, and we spent Sunday afternoon coming to terms with our losses while sipping coffee in cafés on La Croisette. After all the betting tension of the past two days, it made a pleasant change to watch flashy in-line skaters whizzing past and glamorous beach-goers strolling around looking for a place to lie on the beach.

I did have one more flutter on the trip, however. As I was collecting my luggage at Heathrow on Monday afternoon, Dave sidled up and asked how much cash I had left from the trip — a grand total of Fr14. "I'll bet you Fr14 that my bag comes through before yours," he said.

I accepted, lost (predictably) and returned home absolutely broke. Now I know I will never be a high-roller.

HOW MUCH?



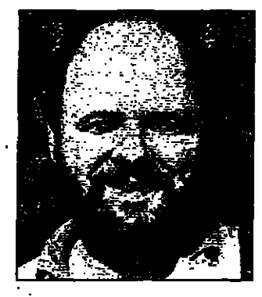
FERDI DUARTE, 37
With baby Kimberley, aged five months, won £100.
● Kimberley has loved it. The racecourse was fine because we booked a table at the restaurant overlooking the track, which was quiet and comfortable. The trip was good because all the transfers were laid on for you. We're planning another racing trip, to Barbados, in the summer.



CHRIS SMITH, 45
Wine trader from Reading, lost £253.
● I didn't end up losing anything on the horses and I was betting £50 a race. My problem on this trip was the computerised roulette machines at our hotel — they're addictive. At one point I was £160 up, but I then lost £250. Overall though, I enjoyed it, especially the trotting night.



BRENDA BROWN, 54
From Chingford, level.
● My husband and I allotted ourselves a certain amount to gamble and were lucky to have a few good wins that meant we didn't lose anything overall. The weekend has been great — it's very romantic being by the sea. Monte Carlo is wonderful because everyone dresses so well; it makes a nice change.



DAVE HARVEY, 43
Manager of a bookmakers in Reading, lost £500.
● The holiday went as I expected. It would have been nice to won, but I was ready to take any losses. It just didn't happen for me this time. I lost about £100 on blackjack, £150 on the horses and £250 on computerised roulette. Sometimes you have good days and sometimes bad.



MATTHEW BALL, 27
Insurance broker from Southend, lost £150.
● I've lost quite a bit, but it's about the same as I sometimes lose on a weekend's betting at home. I knew what I was letting myself in for, so I'm not upset. I've enjoyed walking around, sitting in cafés and taking in the atmosphere of Monte Carlo. I'd definitely come again.

THE FULL MONTE CARLO FACT FILE

■ Tom Chesshyre travelled with Horse Racing Abroad (01444 441661). The Monte Carlo trip cost £450 including flights, transfers, racecourse entry and three nights at Hotel Loews.

HRA also organises trips to Australia, Barbados, Dubai, France, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland and the United States. A three-night trip to the Punchestown National Hunt Festival, in Co Kildare in Ireland, departing on April 27 and staying at a three-star hotel, is £439 — including flights from Heathrow, transfers and racecourse entry.

A three-night trip to see the Arc de Triomphe at Longchamp in Paris in October, staying at a three-star hotel, is £379 — flights from Heathrow and transfers included.

Next February's Monte Carlo trip has yet to be priced.

■ *Doing it yourself: easyJet (0990 292929) has* return flights from Luton to Nice from £110. The four-star Hotel Loews Monte Carlo (00 377 9350 6500) has single or double rooms from £196. The five-star Hôtel de Paris (9216 3000) has single rooms from £180 and doubles from £210. The two-star Hotel Le Versailles (9350 7934) has single rooms from £30 and doubles from £40.

The next race meeting at Cagnes-sur-Mer is in July — details on 00 334 9202 4444.

Holiday Autos (0990 300400) has three days' all-inclusive Group A car rental for £89.90; pick-up from Nice airport.

■ Tips: Remember your binoculars. Make sure your betting slip is correct when it is given to you. Take smart clothes for the Monte Carlo Casino (jackets and ties for men). Spread your bets — don't blow all your cash too quickly!



Casinos are your best bet in Monte Carlo

■ Other racing operators: Team Sports International (01706 715808) organises tailor-made trips for groups; Leger Holidays (01709 830333); Swinley Travel (01942 829772).

■ Further information: The Monaco tourist office (0171-352 9962).

■ My bets: trotting: plus £7; main flat-race meeting: minus £30; casino (roulette): minus £10; electronic roulette: minus £2; aiport carousel luggage bet: *minus £1.40*. Overall: minus £36.40

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24 May	£559	£599	03,10 Aug *	£899	£969
31 May	£499	£629	07,14 Sep *	£749	£799

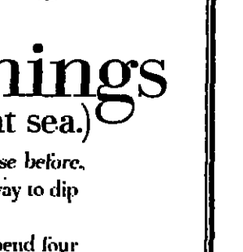
* 13 nts accomm — 3 nt tour inc Kandy/Nuwara Eliya: £99 extra

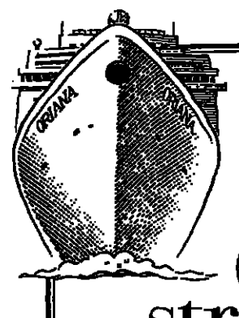
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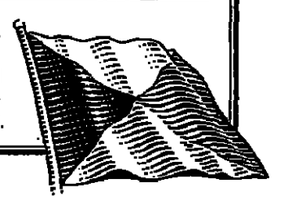
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The gracious Royal Arcade off Piccadilly, originally built for the gentry

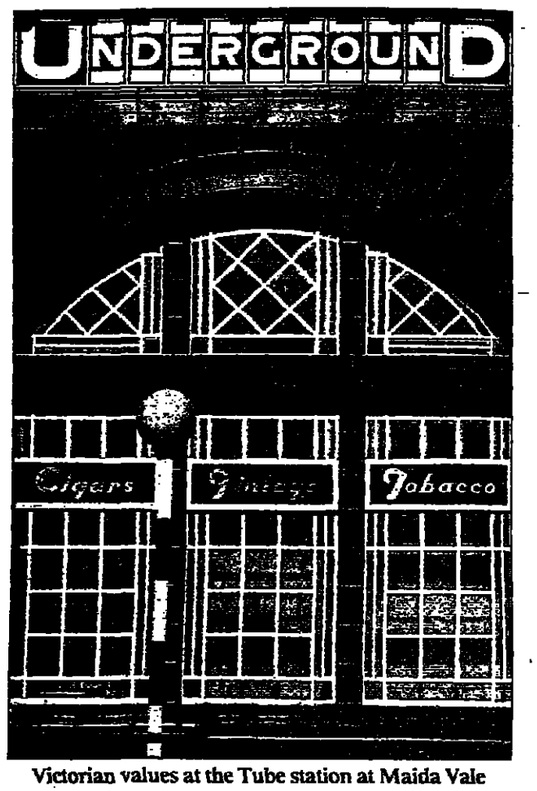
RICHARD TURPIN



London contrasts at the Smithfield meat market, where the wrought-iron gates form a delicate background to the sturdy red telephone boxes

Ever-changing capital gains

Change that comes with growth is not bad; it gives a city life, says **Louise Nicholson**



Victorian values at the Tube station at Maida Vale



Celebrating the Chinese new year in Gerrard Place



A sign of the times at Cutlers' Livery Hall, Warwick Lane

Knocking London is easy and fun, a game enjoyed by most British people — especially Londoners. One guidebook recently bemoaned the loss of Leicester Square's Georgian houses to entertainment halls. Some people doubtless moaned back in 1631, when Charles I gave his friend, Robert Sidney, 2nd Earl of Leicester, a slab of open land, where the Earl built an ostentatious Stuart mansion for himself and entertained lavishly.

A generation later, locals probably grumbled when he added an elite, enclosed square of handsome houses for London's gentry who were moving west to newly built St James's — a sort of American-style gated community. Next century it was, perhaps, the gentry's turn to complain when artists such as William Hogarth arrived and lowered the tone.

The gentry did move away, eventually. Their houses became hotels and Turkish baths. The Alhambra, Empire, Daly's and the Hippodrome were built, bringing good Victorian entertainment to the West End. I bet everyone, gentry and commoners, was thrilled — Queen Victoria certainly enjoyed the Alhambra's circus.

When the Empire's ballets and the Hippodrome's *Hansel and Gretel* opera were replaced by the picture palaces, who complained then? The cinema brought exotic American culture and glamorous Hollywood — hours of escapist dreaming at a fraction of the cost of a theatre ticket.

Leicester Square's story is the story of London, a dynamic capital city, ever changing, ever growing, often for the better and sometimes for the worse, but always interesting.

I came to live in London in the hot summer of 1976. There were pockets of post-1960s fun, deliciously seedy Soho life round the clock and overwhelming arts of all kinds. I remember Clerkenwell's Italian fiesta in July, queueing for my first Prom tickets and exploring Bermondsey's heavily perfumed spice warehouses and thinking I had arrived on a Dickens' film set.

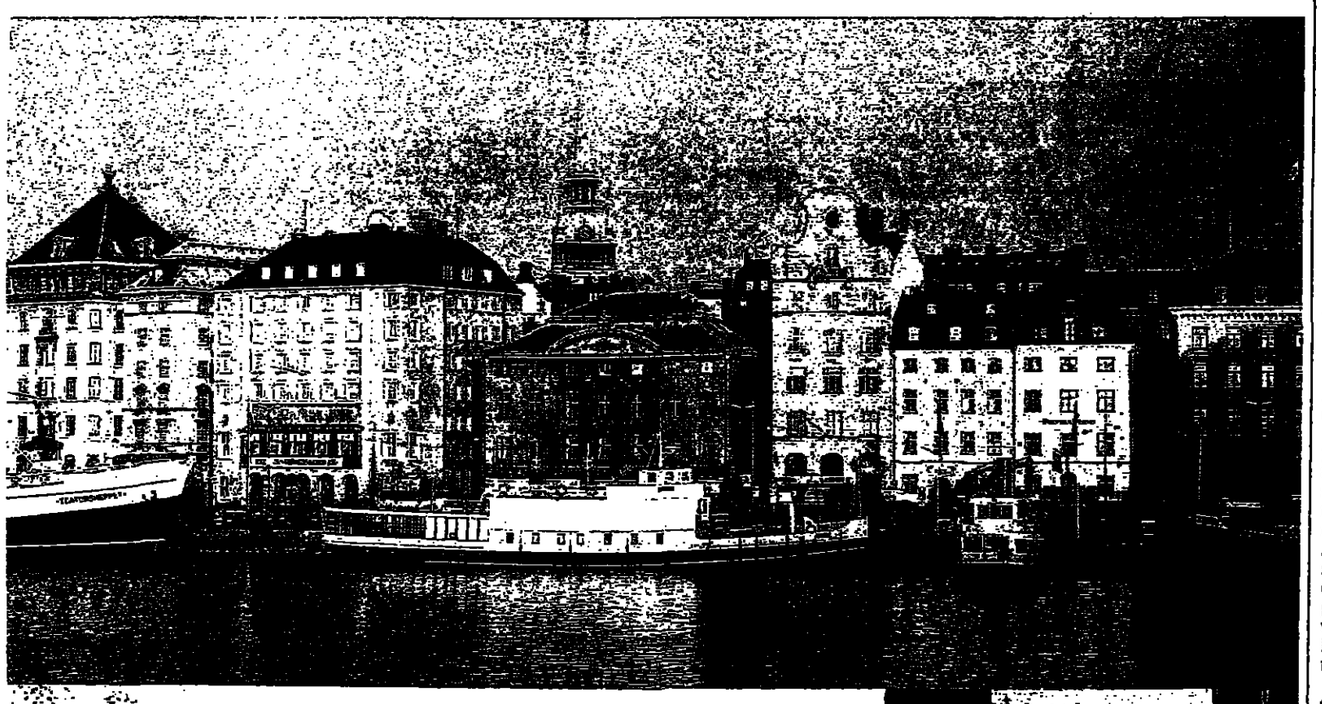
Over the past 20 years, conservationists and energetic communities have saved whole tracts of London — most obviously, Covent Garden Piazza. Hundreds of London's old buildings have been sensitively restored; many interesting new buildings have been added. When the Docklands revival began in 1981, the City responded with the ten-acre Broadgate development — offices, restaurants, street sculpture and entertainment so skilfully integrated that London families, who previously shunned the City, now go there to ice-skate at weekends.

The riverscape, which has changed dramatically since the 1970s, displays both atrocities and wonders. Downstream from Britain's best medieval fort, the Tower of London, for example, looms the eyesore of the Tower Thistle Hotel built in 1973, inappropriate in size, shape and materials. Opposite on the south bank, the listed (and thus protected) warehouses of Butler's Wharf were revitalised in 1988-90 without losing their historic significance.

Despite having no central administrative authority since 1986, London has been improving constantly. Now, with politicians keen to improve London further and the prospect of a new administration with a mayor to run it, the capital should go from strength to strength.

● *Louise Nicholson's* London, *with photographs by Richard Turpin, is published on Thursday (Frances Lincoln, £30)*

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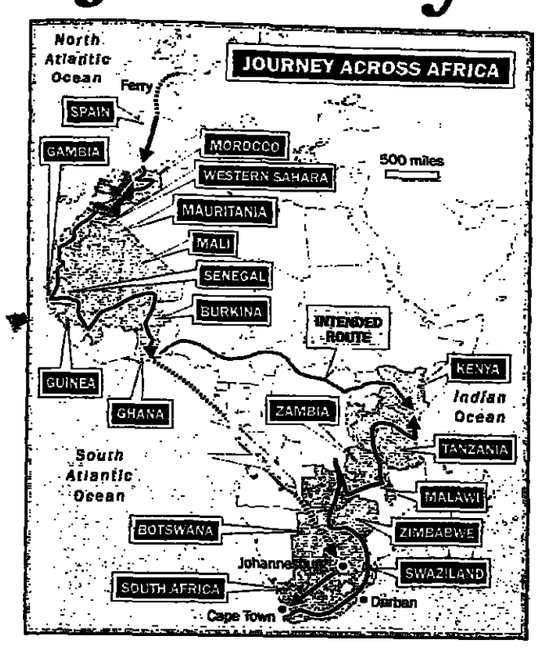
Sweden

The following tour operators have package tours to Stockholm: Travelscene, Cresta. For more information about Stockholm: http:/www.stoinfo.se

هكذا في الأصل

Everyone said **Kay Cox** was mad to drive across Africa with her two-year-old daughter, but everyone was wrong

Tales from an African journey





KAY COX

All mod cons: the Cox family's cosy-looking makeshift camp at Lake Malawi. "Travelling may appear to be chaotic, but life soon takes on a comfortable rhythm"



Amadou, right, showed the Coxes a splendid view of the mosque at Djenne in Mali

It is dusk in a cluster of mud huts in Mali and we are squeezed into an enclosure. The Land Rover takes up most of the space. Our hostess, the mother of at least a dozen kids, squats beside a cauldron of oily orange slop — our supper.

As she stirs the mixture, a noisy snort erupts from the tattered shorts of a toddler beside her. She casually pulls the elastic waist, peers inside and softly calls: "Adama . . ." A girl of no more than six years old leads the lad behind the hut and deals with him. No nappies here.

We came to observe this revealing moment in family life against the advice of almost everyone we spoke to. People thought we had abandoned our senses as well as our professional jobs when my husband Peter and I announced that we were taking six months' leave to drive across Africa with our two-year-old daughter, Georgia.

"Europeans are being killed every day in Nigeria and Kenya by robbers hijacking their vehicles," warned my sister, who used to work at the Foreign Office.

"Rebel activity in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic is sure to turn to war," colleagues warned.

The only way to deal with such people was to point out that none of those things would matter until we had survived crossing the Sahara.

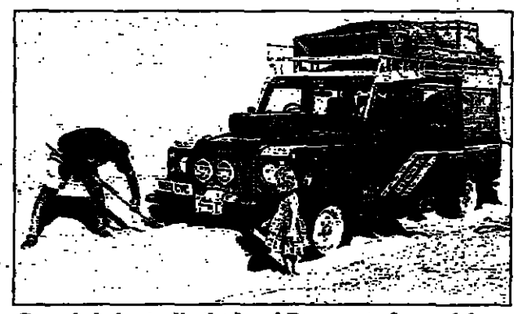
The doctor in the travel clinic was no more enthusiastic as he described our possible deaths: dehydration if we got lost in the desert; meningitis in West Africa; bubonic plague or ebola in Congo.

Of course, there were the more mundane threats of malaria, typhoid, hepatitis and rabies. "I think you're crazy to take a two-year-old," he said (thoughts echoed by her grandparents).

Not that we were cavalier. We had sleepless nights and second thoughts. But we believed the pros outweighed the cons. Peter's job was so demanding that he rarely saw Georgia — or, for that matter, me. What does a two-year-old want more than the 24-hour company of both parents with time on their hands? In return for her Disney videos, she would see real giraffes and elephants and lion kings. And we would all be together at arguably the most important time of her life.

We got ourselves a Land Rover Defender 110, tore out the back seats and created a platform level with the windows. We put a mattress on top, and — voilà — a bijou bedroom/playroom with en suite facilities (a potty). Georgia took a few books, drawing things, her favourite teddy and a doll. (Top tip: when crossing the Sahara take pencils. The scorching heat melts wax crayons into a disgusting mess.)

Starting from Morocco, we drove south through Western Sahara to Mauritania where we crossed the Sahara in convoy with two other groups of travellers.



Georgia helps to dig the Land Rover out of a sand dune

We did not dehydrate, get burnt, get lost, break down, get blown up or otherwise harm ourselves in the three-day desert crossing. Naturally there are no roads and you have to thrash through the axle-deep, shifting sand at top speed to avoid sinking. It was a tough learning curve — terrifically exciting but extremely hot, hard work, digging the vehicle out when you got it wrong. Georgia thought it was hysterical and helped with her little yellow spade. That was not all we learnt. We also practised dune-surfing on a tea tray.

I doubt if there will be a moment in our lives to compare to the one when, 100 miles up the coast from Nouakchott, in Mauritania, the view changed after three days of sand, sand and more sand, to sand, sand and sea. We leapt out, whooping and squealing with relief and delight, and plunged into the water. It was worth everything just for that.

Only then did we admit that there had been times when we had feared we were hopelessly lost and would not have enough fuel to reach safety.

When we finally hit the road, the threats and dangers perceived in the planning stages faded and we learnt to trust our instincts.

The only real worries were where to find fuel and where it was safe to camp. There are more campsites than you might imagine, but often the lavatories were so disgusting it was preferable to find a secluded spot in the bush to spend the night. I came to enjoy the sloppy vegetable stews (usually tomatoes and onions) supplemented by a packet of Beanfeast. Especially as it was Peter's job to cook while I set up camp.

Travelling may appear a chaotic life, but gradually each person assumes a set of duties and life takes on a comfortable rhythm. Before long, our daughter was enlisting local children for raucous games — as long as they did not involve poking her skin and pulling her white hair. The children would laugh together without having a clue what they were all on about.

Language was superfluous for children, but it helped us enormously with the border bureaucrats, who were mostly French-speaking in West Africa. It was often tedious to produce documents and explain our presence so we got off the beaten track, where people rarely saw white faces and probably never a white child. When the blonde imp chirped: "Bonjour, ça va?" it never failed to produce cries of delight.

Then, just when we were bowling along happily, Georgia got sick. There was nothing drastic. She lost her appetite, threw up and had a little diarrhoea, so we decided to see a doctor while we were near a town, Tamale in northern Ghana.

Having given her a brief check, he announced that she had malaria. We simply did not believe him — she had had no fever, we were all taking prophylactics, wearing long sleeves and trousers, spraying exposed skin and sleeping under mosquito nets. He could not do a blood test because it was a public holiday. Surely he was wrong? But when a doctor says: "That's my diagnosis, take it or leave it," you take it. We dreaded giving her another jab — she had hated every one before we left — but that was nothing compared to the vile-tasting chloroquine syrup.

Twice a day we had to pin her down and force it in her mouth. More often than not she threw it up again. After three days — and it felt like three years — she was no better. We went to a hospital, where a blood test confirmed that it was malaria. Another course of chloroquine torture was prescribed. We watched her getting thinner and weaker and asked ourselves: "What have we done?"

When the last day of treatment came, it was impossible to say who was the most relieved as we ceremoniously poured out the remnants of the syrup to prove to Georgia there would be no more.

She had survived for nearly two weeks on nothing but Fanta fizzy orange and water. When she accepted a bowl of porridge, Peter and I hardly dared breathe as we watched the spoon move to her mouth. She repeated this three times and I do not know how I kept calm when I really wanted to race around cheering.

Georgia's third Christmas, a few weeks later, was one to treasure — and not just because Santa left presents under a tinsel-covered palm tree on the beach in Ghana.

Sure enough, the Central African Republic and Congo became ridiculously dangerous. This and our heightened sensitivity to medical problems made us decide to ship the Land Rover to South Africa and drive north to Kenya.

The most frustrating moment of the entire six months was when an army sergeant in Congo turned us back after we had spent most of the day trying to get over the border.

Sitting in Lusaka, Zambia, a weekend in southeast Congo had proved irresistible although war raged in the top half of the country. Our visas were valid for one more week and Lubumbashi, Congo's second city, was only 30 miles over the border.

However, 28 miles over the border there was a road block made of old bits of engines, and we did not get past it. The sergeant had a rocket launcher on his shoulder. Who could argue?

That was not our only surprise. The immigration officer at the border post who had threatened to shoot Peter (but settled for a $5 bribe) caught us getting our exit stamps and would not let us out. He did not want more money. He was furious that he had been over-ruled by any army upstart and was adamant that we had to go back. He waved off our protests that it was getting dark, and found us a motel.

We got through, but only after Rocket Man had turned out everything from the tent to the toilet bag to save his machismo.

South Africa was a straightforward holiday where the only struggle was to get hold of the credit card without Peter realising. East Africa was a bus tour compared to the west coast. There are still truck-swallowing potholes on the roads and you can get robbed, but our only real problem was avoiding the convoys of overland lorries full of enthusiastic adventurers.

I would have welcomed a truck in Chobe National Park in Botswana, when a lion announced himself with a roar that shook the ground. Luckily, lions have not figured out that ripping a tent is the jungle equivalent of a packet of crisps. We leapt in with uncharacteristic agility.

That was the last time our lives were threatened. The days were so pleasant that we began to wonder how long we could keep driving before we went bankrupt — and whether it would matter.

Occasionally we did miss home: a hot bath, a glass of wine, the cinema, toast. Once Georgia said: "I want to go home" and in a Hollywood moment I replied: "Darling, home is where mummy and daddy are." It must have worked because she never mentioned it again.

Today we are a stronger and wiser family. Even if Georgia retains no long-term specific memories, the benefits are sunk in her psyche for ever.

HOW TO DRIVE THROUGH AFRICA

■ Information: the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (0171-238 4503/4504) provides information and advice on individual countries. At present it advises against all travel to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Western Sahara and, unless on essential business, to the Central African Republic.

The Expedition Advisory Centre at the Royal Geographic Society (0171-591 3030), has a useful booklet: *Sources of Information for Independent and Overland Travellers* (£5 including p&p).

■ Visas: you will probably have to collect visas as you go during a lengthy expedition. *Traveller's Handbook* (Wexas, £14.99) gives general advice.

■ Transport: Land Rover (0121-781 6000) recommends its Defender, Discovery or Range Rover models, which can be customised. Consult *The Vehicle-Dependent Expedition Guide* by Tom Sheppard (£26 through RGS, above). A course is essential if you have never driven a 4WD.

■ Equipment: a roof-top tent to escape animals; an auto water filter which works off a vehicle's battery; sturdy leather boots (especially for children); compass; multipurpose knife; a head lamp; pens; toilet rolls; a fridge; foam mattress; toddler's pushchair; a baseball bat (for protection) and a ball to play with it, to avoid suspicion at borders.



Kay Cox with Georgia and friend in St Louis, Senegal

■ Medical requirements: British Airways Travel Clinic, 80 Harley St, London (0171-580 3047) recommends protection against polio, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, yellow fever, diphtheria, meningococcal meningitis A and C, and malaria. The Department of Health's booklet, *Health Advice for Travellers*, gives details of health precautions, reciprocal agreements and vaccinations, and is free from main post offices or call 0800 555777.

Bugs, Bites and Bowels by Jane Howarth (Cadogan, £9.99); *Where there is no Doctor: African Edition* (Macmillan, £7.25). Books on travelling with children include *Your Child's Health Abroad: A Parent's Guide* by Dr Jane Wilson-Howarth and Dr Matthew Ellis (Bradt, £8.95), and Maureen Wheeler's *Travel With Children* (Lonely Planet, £6.95).

■ Best maps: buy them in the UK. Try Stanfords in London (0171-836 1321). The RGS has a Map Room, open 11am-5pm, Mon to Fri.

■ Recommended reading: *Africa on a Shoestring* (Lonely Planet, £17.99); *Africa By Road* (Bradt, £12.95); Lonely Planet, Rough Guides, Footprint Handbooks and Bradt also offer guides to individual destinations.

JOANNA HUNTER

Scene and not Herd

The grandeur of Namibia's Fish River Canyon is one of Africa's greatest natural wonders - hundreds of millions of years old. Here, peaceful isolation is undisturbed. Throughout the day the scene is a kaleidoscope of natural changing colours, much like the contrasts of the landscapes of Namibia herself. One of the largest and most undisturbed countries in Africa, yet with less than two people per square kilometre. The spirit of freedom is overwhelming.

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SKI WEEKEND: TOURING THE ALPS

Such high slopes meet a great expectation



DOUG SAGER

A new generation of ski-tourers has created an adventure sport that goes beyond walking. And nothing beats the Haute Route



DOUG SAGER

On the roof of Europe there are no people, no tracks and no buildings, just gaping fields of crevasses, endless glacier inclines and chilling, powder-choked couloirs

It is April, and we are somewhere in the Alps. No doubt our guide, equipped with maps, compass and GPS satellite navigation device, could pinpoint our position if there were any visual references for him to go by. All I know is that we left Saas Fee four days ago, heading for Chamonix.

The classic Haute Route line we are following runs across Switzerland into Italy and over to France. But there are hundreds of detours, and no signposts up here on the roof of Europe, where we climb up and slide down day after day between the altitudes of 3,000 and 4,000 metres. There are no people, no tracks and no buildings, except the alpine club huts as much as one day's march apart from each other, across gaping fields of crevasses, up endless glacier inclines and down chilling, powder-choked couloirs.



An exercise in orienteering

After days of sweltering in sunshine that scorched my retinas and burnt my inner ears, we are now halted by a freezing snow squall. White snow and fog swirl, confounding all sense of direction and upsetting my equilibrium to the point where, looking down towards my (now invisible) skis, I cannot honestly tell whether I am moving or standing still.

"Do not," our guide John Hogg says with measured emphasis, "take off your skis". Because skis spread one's weight over a larger surface area, they reduce the risk of plummeting into an invisible crevasse. I interrupt the spooky silence to ask John if he is worried. "Concerned," is the terse reply.

As it happens, we are on the edge of a sector where the crevasses are bigger than houses. There is nothing for it but to rope up and wait. Luckily, the blizzard turns out to be the mountain equivalent of an April shower, and within the hour we are once again shuffling single file, heels kicking free in our special touring bindings at a pace of 50 steps per minute, our long touring poles probing out to the sides like insects' antennae.

Where do you go when even the off-piste itineraries of your favourite resort begin to seem overly familiar and crowded? What do you do when ski lifts close, but snow on the peaks is still deep, your legs are strong and you haven't the heart to give up skiing just yet and surrender to summer? Ski-touring is the answer.

It is the answer to how to find adventure in the high Alps. It takes you to areas otherwise inaccessible (if only because of legal restrictions) even by helicopter. It exposes you to risk (avalanche fatalities are higher than for any other category), and educates you to snow structures seldom encountered within resort boundaries.

Above all, it gives you time. It is a contemplative rather than a competitive pastime. Although some of the under-50s may race ahead, experienced guides set a rhythmic pace which is hypnotically slow and steady. The idea is never to break into a potentially chilling sweat, never to exhaust physical reserves which might be required in an emergency, and to keep going for hours at a time.

Traditionally, ski-touring has appealed more to walkers than skiers. The old guard of the touring brigade, members of the Swiss Alpine Club for example, tend to be bearded, pipe-smoking, woolly jumper-wearing types who wouldn't be caught dead in Gore-Tex or on a chairlift.

But there is a new generation of tourers, including telemarkers, snowboarders (ascending on snowshoes or even snowboards that have split in half) and skiers on the new, "carving" skis. Cherry tobacco is no longer the only thing smoked in stuffy mountain huts!

The generation gap is further evident in different approaches to descending the mountain. Whereas traditionalists regard walking uphill as an end in itself — and indeed have been known to WALK back downhill again — newcomers tolerate the uphill slog only as the means to an end. Touring is simply the only way to get to the best downhill skiing.

Long-range touring requires special skis, boots and bindings. But the curious day-tripper can experiment with ordinary skis and boots. Most ski shops in the Alps hire out skins and adapter bindings like the SecuraFix model, which fits inside ordinary downhill bindings. These are ideal for short climbs on fairly flat terrain.

Skins define touring. Originally they were made out of seal pelts, which enabled free uphill gliding while resisting backsliding. Today's synthetic skins come with a permanent glue for easy application to the bottoms of any ski. New skin sizes are now available for wide body, "fat boy" powder skis, semi-fat skis like Volkl's Snow Ranger and for parabolic carving skis, all of which make off-piste descents easier for older and less adept skiers.

Tactical touring, sometimes as short as 15 minutes, is almost the only way to get away from hordes of off-piste skiers fighting for increasingly overcrowded powder lines. Skiers without skins are forced to remove their skis and flounder up in deep snow. Those with skins can scale 100 vertical metres in less than 20 minutes and expand their off-piste possibilities.

Small steps soon lead to grander tours. The great touring areas of the Alps include the Mont Blanc massif, the Bernese Oberland in Switzerland, the Stubai and Oetztal regions of Austria, and the Dolomites and Monte Rosa ranges of Italy. But nothing beats the world's most famous tour, the Haute Route.

The Chamonix-Zermatt route was first negotiated in the summer of 1861 by members of the British Alpine Club, though not skied until the winter of 1903. The classic line of the Haute Route takes in 23 glaciers and some 10,000 vertical metres of up and downhill work.

Arguments rage over whether it is more scenic and satisfying to tour from Saas Fee in the east to Chamonix in the west, or vice versa. I enjoyed better skiing moving west, but more challenging climbs heading out of Chamonix. Of course, everything depends on the summits you choose, and the many options mean every Haute Route can be a unique experience.

Overnight excursions introduce tourers to the world's top hotel chain, the 2,000 odd mountain refuges ranging from emergency bivouacs to enchanting inns found in the the lowest of alpine pastures or as high as 4,554 metres, where the quaint wooden balconies of the 104-year-old Rifugio Regina Margherita on the Italian side of the Monte Rosa massif look out over the eternal snows.

For me, views of these architectural wonders — many built on knife-edge cliffs or rock islands high above constantly shifting glaciers — and the odd etiquette of staying in them are sufficient reason to make the Haute Route tour. But another is that the Haute Route is the ultimate in one-upmanship.

Many people who fancy themselves on the slopes have never been to the top. When you have stumbled from a freezing dormitory bunk at 4am on to snow illuminated only by your miner's-style headlamp, skirted blue ice crevasses and climbed 1,200 vertical metres before breakfast, the question of who looks better on some resort black run becomes an issue of everlasting inconsequence. And, standing high on a 4,000-metre-plus summit, even the mortgage looks a little smaller.

SKI-TOURING FACT FILE

■ **How to go:** Mainstream tour operators do not offer ski-touring holidays. Ski Weekend (01367 241636) is an off-piste specialist firm with excellent touring options. Collineige (01276 24262) has a listing of Chamonix ski-touring packages for April. The Ski Club of Great Britain (0181-410 2000) has its own touring packages. The Eagle Ski Club (01932 248628) is Britain's most enthusiastic amateur ski-touring organisation.

■ **What it costs:** Ski Weekend's Haute Route package for £439 includes eight days with a guide (six people per tour) flights, transfers, one night's B&B accommodation (mountain huts are an extra £25 per night). Collineige charges from £750 for seven nights, including travel, accommodation and guide. The Ski Club of Great Britain offers nine nights for £795 including guide (six people per group) and accommodation.

■ **Safety:** Ski-touring carries considerable risk, and high altitude tours like the Haute Route should not be undertaken without a qualified mountain guide. Skiers will need: crampons, ice axe, full-body climbing harness, touring boots with Vibram soles for rock climbing and an avalanche transceiver. Among guiding firms most experienced in Haute Route tours are the Compagnie des Guides (0033 45053 0088) in Chamonix, the Courmayeur Guides Bureau (0039 165 842064), and the Zermatt Mountain Guides (0041 27 9662460). Highly recommended touring guides with worldwide experience include Canadian John Hogg (001 250 3427313), American Hans Solmssen (0041 27 7717683), and Chamonix's Jean-Marie Olianti (0033 45053 0188).

■ **Cover:** Ski-touring is excluded from many holiday insurance packages. Internationally valid touring insurance, including helicopter skiing options, is available from Snowcard (01327 262805).



RETURN TO ETHIOPIA

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In the past decade few travellers have visited Ethiopia and we are therefore delighted to be able to arrange for small parties of up to 15 participants to return to this fascinating ancient land. Without doubt Ethiopia offers the most ancient cultural heritage of all sub-Saharan Africa, a land without equal.

With a recorded history which began in the 6th century BC with the dawning of the Axumite civilisation, there sprang a line of Emperors who ruled with few interruptions until the death of Haile Selassie. Our visit will include their palaces in the old capital of Gondar and in Addis Ababa.





Christianity reached Ethiopia some 200 years before it arrived in Britain. On our visit to Lalibela we will see the amazing 12th century church, hewn from the rock. We will visit the island monasteries of Lake Tana and the ancient monastery of Debre Libanos, spectacularly located at the bottom of a large gorge which one of the tributaries of the Blue Nile runs through.

We will also visit the second largest falls in Africa at Tisisat. Here the Blue Nile cascades into the gorge and begins its long journey down through the plateau and on to the Sudan.

Travellers are assured of a warm welcome but must be prepared for simple accommodation, poor road conditions and possible delays. The reward however, will be a unique travel experience in a profoundly beautiful land. Now is the time to visit before the large tour operators arrive and the nature of the country is changed forever.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London Heathrow to Addis Ababa. Evening departure by Ethiopian Airlines.
Day 2 Addis Ababa. Morning arrival and drive to the Hilton Hotel, set in a garden overlooking the former Emperor's Palace for a 2 night stay. Afternoon visit to some of the major sights; the National Museum, Africa Hall, St George's Cathedral and the modern Baroque Trinity Cathedral.
Day 3 Addis Ababa. Excursion to the Debre Libanos Monastery, founded by St Tekle Haimanot. See the Blue Nile Gorge.
Day 4 Gondar. Morning flight to Gondar for a two night stay. Afternoon visit to the church of Debre Berhan Selassie with its unique murals. Also visit Mariam Kusquam Church and the ruins of Mentowab's Castle.
Day 5 Gondar. Full day excursion to the extraordinary group of castles built in the 17th century when King Fasilidas expelled the Portuguese and made Gondar his capital. The architecture is fascinating, at first glimpse it has a vaguely Moorish feel, but closer scrutiny reveals the influences of the Axumite tradition and a strong link with Southern Arabia. Afternoon at leisure, or take an optional drive to Gorgora to see the medieval church of Debre Sina Mariam.
Day 6 Bahar Dar. Drive to Bahar Dar for a three night stay. Afternoon excursion of the city, continue on to see the source of the Blue Nile.
Day 7 Lake Tana. A full day excursion of Lake Tana by motorboat with a picnic lunch on board. Visit the Zeghie Peninsula and the Narga Selassi. We will visit some of the island monasteries. (It is important to note that several monasteries are not open to women).
Day 8 Tisisat Falls (Smoking Water). A short drive and walk brings us to the falls where the Blue Nile thunders 150 feet into a chasm. Afternoon free.
Day 9 Lalibela. Fly to Lalibela, the "New Jerusalem" created by King Lalibela in the 12th century. Stay for two nights. Afternoon excursion by mule (approx 4 hours) to Ahestun Mariam.
Day 10 Lalibela. We will explore some of the monolithic churches, hewn out of rock, many of which are still in use today. The surrounding landscape is amongst the most rugged and awe inspiring in the country.
Day 11 Axum. Fly to Axum, birthplace of Ethiopian civilisation. It is said that the Queen of Sheba lived here in a palace whose remains are located just outside the town. Stay two nights. Afternoon visit to the Steles, the great 4th century obelisks. These blocks of granite are carved in a representation of multi-storied buildings, the tallest at over 33 metres represents a 13 storey building. The style is similar to the construction still used in the Hadramaut in the Yemen. Also see Queen Sheba's bath, the Tomb of King Kaleb and the Tomb of King Basen.
Day 12 Axum. Early morning visit to the quarry where the Stellae were taken. Later visit Miriamsion Church, remains of the Great Temple (all in the church grounds) and the Axum Museum.
Day 13 Axum-Addis Ababa. Drive to Yeha to see the pre-Axumite ruins. Return by air in the early evening to Addis Ababa. Overnight stay at the Hilton.
Day 14 Addis Ababa to London Heathrow. Morning departure by Ethiopian Airlines for London, arriving in the late afternoon.

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هكذا من الأصل

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Breaking with a popular radio tradition

As *Breakaway* goes off air today, Steve Keenan asks if broadcast travel is 'dumbing down'



ANGLIA TV

Anne Gregg, former presenter, on holiday in Malta



Radio travel programmes encouraged listeners to create a picture in their minds as well as providing high quality consumer and news-led items

The strains of the familiar *Breakaway* theme tune will fade for the last time this morning when radio's travel flagship sinks below the horizon.

Coffee, toast, the Saturday papers and *Breakaway*. The peppy, perky 1920s signature tune has been a weekly fixture to a generation of bed-bound travellers.

This morning, they will be *transported to Moscow and* Albania as the swansong programme examines the changes in travel to Eastern Europe in the past two decades.

But from next weekend, listeners will have to whistle their own tune. First broadcast in September 1979, with Barry Norman as the presenter, *Breakaway* has been axed in Radio 4's current scheduling shake-up, a few episodes short of its 1,000th programme.

The show was conceived as a champion of the consumer, the first to cover the travel industry with a mandate to examine the activities of industry mavericks and fraudsters. Its demise is being mourned by many, who are not only questioning the passing of an institution but lamenting the decline in quality in travel programmes in the broadcast media — part of what has been described as a 'dumbing-down' at Radio 4.

"Why *Breakaway* can't be kept is beyond me — but then I'm not in charge of Radio 4," said Jenny Mallinson-Duff, the original producer of *Breakaway* and now producer of *Travelog*, the Channel 4 travel show. "With a name as well-known as *Breakaway*, why not revamp it? Why get rid of the name when it has proved itself to be popular?

"Why not get *Bill* Bryson or Colin Thubron in? That would be fascinating. But I have always thought travel has been the poor cousin of most *programming and it is not* treated properly in the schedules. Radio bosses don't realise how important a holiday is to people in this country: how a *travel programme deals with* hopes and dreams."

John Bell, a more recent *Breakaway* producer (1988-90), is saddened: "There is nothing as good as a good radio travel piece, what I call smelly radio. It takes you there and into the culture — but it requires time and thought. It is completely *different now. Breakaway* used to fill a gap, but it has gone and not been replaced."

Breakaway — which replaced *Away From it All*, fronted by Joan Bakewell — was the brainchild of BBC staff producer Roger McDonald. While originally a seasonal show, its popularity meant it quickly became a weekly fixture.

The theme tune is based on a 1920s song also entitled *Breakaway*, which was edited to provide the 30-second intro to the programme. Over the years, it has been sung or performed by Belgian bell ringers, Irish folk bands and Zulu children to herald the start of the show.

Radio's ability to react faster than television to breaking news enabled *Breakaway* to scrap its planned programme content on the Friday that *Laker Airways went bust. An* entire 30 minutes was spent following up the story the next day, explaining to a baffled public the repercussions of the collapse. *Ms Mallinson-Duff* recalled: "Nobody had looked at the travel trade and questioned its practices before."

Many feel, however, that the programme has struggled for identity in the past few years. *Having used two presenters* until 1990, *Breakaway* has since had a succession of new faces — Julian Pettifer, Ken Bruce, Sandy Gall, Bill Oddie and *Anne Gregg were among* those who preceded current presenter Pete McCarthy.

There has also been evidence of a decline in the *quantity and quality of its* consumer and news-led content, along with a reduction in the amount of factual and practical information about destinations featured. For example, last weekend Mr McCarthy traced his ancestral roots in Ireland, but there was no information about prices or travel, as well as no industry news. And the number of listeners has declined from a peak of 1.5 million in the 1980s *to around 800,000 in recent* weeks.

Ms Gregg presented *Breakaway* in 1996-97 until her contract was not renewed. *"The reason they gave for not* renewing it was that they wanted to make the programme more consumer-orientated," she said. "But it has *become less so since then.* Now that *Breakaway* is going, the consumer content will disappear altogether."

Breakaway's demise means *there are now hardly any* radio travel shows. *Going Places* is also being axed from Radio 4's Friday night slot, and *Blue Skies* on Radio 5 is currently off air. The main remaining national radio shows are Alistair McKenzie's on Classic FM and Jennifer Cox's show, *Global Update* — ten minutes long — on Radio 1.

So it looks as though television will have to take up the mantle of investigative broadcast reporting of travel. However, many believe that TV's obsession with glitz and celebrity presenters makes this unlikely.

Ms Gregg said: "I don't mean to be scathing about television, but the shows are done as entertainment and are personality-led, rather than *presented by travel journal*ists. You watch the presenter and don't get an in-depth look at the destination. It is very superficial.

"*Breakaway* was much more a newspaper treatment of travel than television. You learnt something about the place."

The current series of ITV's *Wish You Were Here...?* features former Page 3 girl Linda Lusardi and Arsenal goalkeeper David Seaman; Oz Clarke is a guest presenter on BBC1's *Holiday* and actress Heather Mills was among those featured in the New Year run of *C4's Travelog*. The emphasis is on the celeb, not the place.

Judith Chalmers, who has been elbowed onto the sidelines by "glamorous" Anthea Turner on *Wish You Were Here...?*, said: "Where there used to be much longer links and information, now it is *much lighter and more 'fun'.*"

And the recent spate of fly-on-the-wall documentaries about the travel industry — such as *The Cruise*, *Hotel* and *Britannia* — have tended to concentrate on colourful behind-the-scenes characters rather than consumer issues. Finding out about working on a charter airline, a cruise ship, a hotel or at a resort may be interesting, but is a far cry from investigative reporting.

BBC1's *Watchdog* is perhaps the only remaining broadcasting programme that *does* campaign for consumer's rights regarding their holidays — *but it is reviled by* many for its terrier-like tactics. Steven Freudmann, president of the Association of British Travel Agents, said: "*Watchdog is one of the worst* examples of cheap tabloid journalism."

He is unlikely to be *any more pleased* with GMTV's current campaign against poorly-maintained hotels in the Dominican Republic — a prime example of important travel industry issues being left to general news/consumer programmes, rather than given a slot of their own. (See our latest report on the Dominican Republic story, page 35.)

Given the lack of a high quality investigative travel programme on TV, there is no doubt that *Breakaway* will be missed. Peter Nunn, producer of Radio 5's *Blue Skies*, believes that *Breakaway* not only won over listeners through its probing reporting, but also put together evocative features: "Radio is an ideal *medium for people to listen to* what is the most important part of their life on an annual basis, and on radio travel is about evolving images in people's minds. You *create a* picture."

Radio 4 *is*, however, launching a new travel programme (starting next Sunday at noon). Called *Hunting for Heidi*, the show follows the footsteps of author Joanna Spyri, whose *Heidi* books were set in Switzerland. It will be presented by a weather-presenter, Dilly Barlow — so seems hardly likely to follow in the footsteps of *Breakaway's* hard-hitting reporters.

Saturday mornings will never be the same again.

This week's near-disaster at Stansted was a reminder of what can go wrong. **Paul Grogan** reports from a cockpit

Sometimes it's a wing and a prayer



JEREMY SELWYN

A plane flies over the crash-landed BAe 748 at Stansted this week

Captain John Barrington keeps a Ford Escort XR4 motoring compass on the dashboard of his Boeing 757 aircraft.

"It's there in case everything else goes to crap," he says.

In a week when an Emerald Airways' aircraft carrying 40 players and guests of Leeds United crash-landed at Stansted, his explanation for the *compass was portentous.*

I had joined Captain Barrington to discover what goes on in the cockpit of a holiday charter jet.

There has been a worrying series of near-disasters, the latest last Monday when Captain John Hackett safely landed his BAe 748 after an engine exploded on takeoff and a fire broke out at 150ft.

The incident followed that of a Virgin Airbus with 314 people on board that crash-landed with 15 minutes' flying time to spare and minus one set of landing gear, at Heathrow last November.

Last August, two aircraft passed within 200ft of each other at Heathrow, hidden in cloud cover.

The pilots of both the Virgin and Emerald aircraft were praised for their cool thinking under pressure.

But the air above Britain *has become busier, with a 6 per cent increase* in flights last year to 3.7 million. So Captain Barrington was, as usual, on full alert as he prepared his 757 charter for the flight from Manchester to the Algarve.

His First Officer, Mary *Gifford, is a former ratings* officer who started flying 11 years ago. Everything is done in tandem, everything double-checked.

"There must be enough fuel to get there, enough to get to an alternate airport, plus 30 minutes in the hold (for circling the airfield). If you don't land first time, because of low visibility for example, you must have enough to make another approach without using any of the extra fuel. If not, you have to re-route to another airfield," says Captain Barrington.

The 757, carrying 233 passengers, eases out at 9.15am across an apron slick with *rain, darkened by a stormy* Manchester morning. The pilots check and double-check the instruments. "You can fly without them but it's hard work," says Captain Barrington. Check.

The plane is poised on the runway. As it accelerates, the pitch of the duet increases: "Set 1.2 EPR." "Stabilised." "Preset thrust." "Thrust *set..." "80 knots..." "V1..."*

V1 is the point of no return: for this flight, 4,000ft down the 10,000ft-long runway. *After V1 the plane is travelling* too fast to stop before the M6, and must take off. If an engine is going to fail, pilots would *prefer it to happen before V1.*

At Stansted, V1 would have been at 2,000ft for the BAe 748 heading for Leeds.

En route to the Algarve, we reach cruising altitude. The automatic pilot is switched on. The flight plan takes into account every variable, even the weight of 233 tangerine trifles on board (35kg out of a catering load of 1,760kg).

A German airline, says Captain Barrington, has a system to guard against panic. "I've heard they have a 15-second delay after any warning. Even if there's a fire in one of the engines — about as bad as things can get — *they pause to think.* I've seen pilots in simulators panic and shut down the wrong engine. If you only had two to start with, that doesn't leave you with much."

As we talk, ATC reports another aircraft in visual range. Squinting at the bright blue arc of the horizon, we scan the sky. "If he gets really close, an excited American woman will tell us all about it," says Captain Barrington, indicating the Traffic Alert *and Collision Avoidance Sys*tem (TCAS), which tracks any traffic in your flight path.

The CAA has insisted TCAS *must be fitted to all aircraft flying in Europe by the end of* 1999. It has been mandatory for any aircraft flying to or within the USA since 1992.

A small triangle appears briefly on the screen. Seconds later it passes beneath us. Three miles away, and 2,000 feet below us, a Monarch Airbus looks huge. Regulations allow 1,000 feet separation vertically, three miles horizontally.

"I had a jumbo 1,000 feet below me at Manchester a few weeks ago," says Mary, "and *it looked big. One of the* passengers who'd been giving the cabin crew grief started yelling, 'We've had a near miss, we've had a near miss'. People like that are more *hazardous than the traffic.*"

MARRAKESH TO PARIS

A Peninsular Cruise - visiting Marrakesh, Casablanca, Lisbon (Expo 98 Exhibition), Oporto, La Coruna, Cherbourg, Paris & Eurostar to London

Fly from London direct to Marrakesh for two nights at the 4-star Hotel Atlas (or similar) followed by a six-night cruise from Casablanca on board the first-class MS Switzerland. The ship will call at Lisbon which hosts Expo 98, then cruise on to northern Portugal to Oporto, thence Spain's Costa Verde and La Coruna before arrriving in Cherbourg in France. From here we travel by road to Paris to stay for one night at the 5-star deluxe Hilton at the Eiffel Tower before returning by Eurostar to London Waterloo.

MS SWITZERLAND

The MS Switzerland has 218 air-conditioned cabins with full facilities including WC, bath, shower, wash-basin and TV. The accommodation is spread over 7 decks and the public facilities include a one-sitting dining in a delightful restaurant, a number of bars, Admiral's Lounge, shop, fitness centre, library, casino, swimming pool, beauty parlour and reception. There are a number of junior suites with extra living space. The vessel, renovated in 1991 and again in 1996, draws a draft of 28ft and is 532ft long, 70ft on the beam, 15,739 gross tonnage and has a complement of 210 crew.

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AROUND THE WORLD A WEEKEND GUIDE

TRAVEL TIPS by Jill Crawshaw

TRAVEL JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR



Go wild in Dominica

MEASURING 29 miles by 16, Dominica is one of the largest and most mountainous of the Windward Isles. It is also one of the least developed and rarely features in holiday brochures — probably because it has few good beaches. However, it is now becoming known as the Caribbean's Nature Island — the Morne Trois Pitons National Park has been designated as a World Heritage Site.

Reef and Rainforest Tours (01803 866965) has chosen Dominica as its first Caribbean venture for its landscapes and wildlife. A 17-day tour includes trekking in rainforests to the Valley of Desolation, a wilderness of sulphur springs and boiling mud pools, searching for endemic parrots and about 365 other bird species, as well as whale-watching, sea-kayaking and snorkelling or diving.

The tour costs £1,783 for full-board accommodation, but not international flights.

A NEW hop-on, hop-off go-as-you-please service, the US Bus, is to start on May 1. It is aimed at young independent travellers on a budget and the buses stop off at youth hostels and cheap hotels. The 25-day flexi-pass allows travelling on any of ten days for £169, while a 15-day pass covers five days and costs £99. For more information, call 01892 532060.

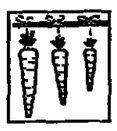
Planting out

THERE are about 100 garden-loving hosts, mostly in Britain but some in France, who offer accommodation largely on a B&B basis (some providing dinner as well). They are all enthusiasts with interesting gardens of their own, and will direct their guests to other local horticultural treasures.

The venues range from an 18th-century gamekeeper's cottage on a working sheep farm with a two-acre plantsman's garden in Arlington, Sussex, costing £25 per person per night, to the listed Georgian Thornhill Park in Stalbridge, Dorset, where garden design and practical courses are also held (£35 per night).

The *Bed and Breakfast UK for Garden Lovers* leaflet is free (send a self-addressed 22cm x 11cm envelope with four loose first-class stamps) from: BBGL, Handywater Farm, Sibford Gower, Banbury, Oxon OX15 5AE.

Donkey treat



WITH a donkey as a companion, families can explore the Provence that inspired the books and films of Marcel Pagnol — sites include Aubagne, where he was born and filmed much of *Manon des Sources*, and La Treille where he spent his holidays which became the model for *Jean de Florette*.

On a four-day donkey package, "Voyage avec mon âne", families are expected to feed, groom and hug their donkey, which will carry their baggage and picnic lunches between hotels and generally behave as donkeys do. The price of Frl,300 (about £135) per adult, Fr680 (£70) for children, with infants under five travelling free, covers three nights' half-board in Logis de France hotels, picnics and donkey hire. More information from Loisirs Accueil (00 334 9059 4939).

ACCESS to buildings not normally open to the public and special openings out of regular hours are offered by Martin Randall Travel (0181-742 3355). On a six-day Connoisseur's Rome Tour from November 2 costing £1,090, you can visit the Sistine Chapel, the Palazzo Farnese and the recently reopened Galleria Borghese without the crowds. A week's Christmas Tour (December 21-28) of Sicily costing £1,210 features the Palazzo Ganci-Valguarnera. All prices include flights, most meals, entrance fees and the services of a lecturer.

Corfu return

THE over-valuation of the Greek drachma in the past may have done Prospero's Isle a favour. Those for whom Corfu was a fashionable choice until the late 1970s are returning to the upmarket resorts in the northeast, while the package tourists have gone for cheaper Turkish delights. Patricia Cookson, of CV Travel (0171-581 0851), believes Corfu has gone full circle as the younger generation rediscover it with their children. The villa specialist's resorts include Nissaki and Barbáti, Kaminaki, Kalámi and Kassiópi. A typical villa sleeping four costs between £450 and £700.

Travel à la Carte (01635 201140) offers four-day breaks between mid-May and mid-July, then in September and October. A mini-break at the Villa Anda on the northeast coast costs £269 per person, including flights.

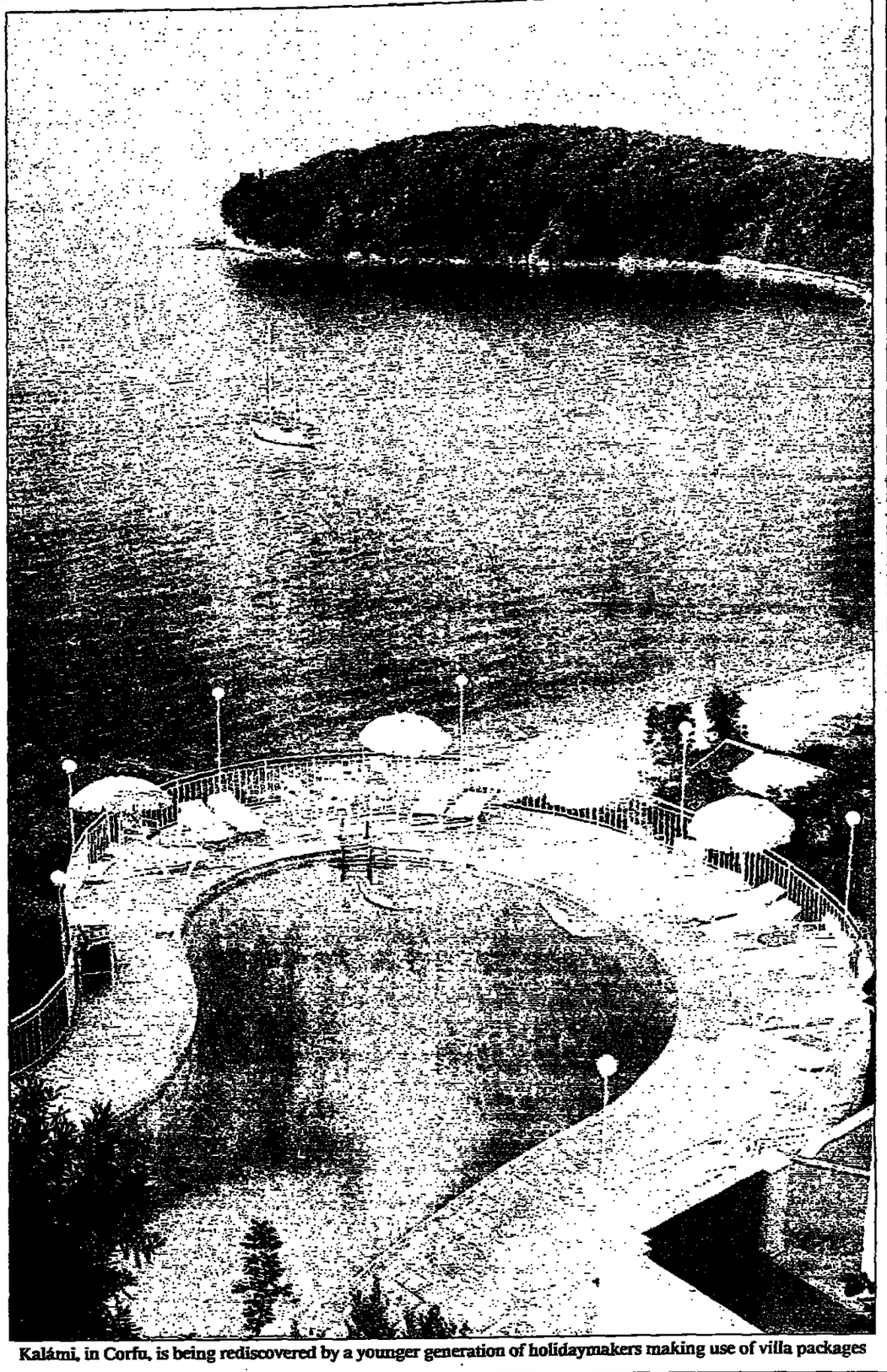
Travel articles in The Times since the beginning of the year are on our Internet site. See "Most Recent" links on http://www.the-times.co.uk

ABBIE ENOCK



On Dominica lies the Valley of Desolation, a wilderness of sulphur springs

ASPECT



Kalámi, in Corfu, is being rediscovered by a younger generation of holidaymakers making use of villa packages

PACK YOUR BAGS

☐ FANCY messing about on the river? Blakes Boating Holidays (01603 782911) has several boats available over Easter on the Norfolk Broads and elsewhere. A Blue Chip cruiser sleeping seven people based on the River Waveney on the Suffolk/Norfolk border costs from £97 per person, departing from St Olaves on April 11. Three nights on the *Sunchaser* leaving from York on April 11 and cruising along the rivers Ouse and Ure is from £110 per person, based on two sharing. Prices include cancellation insurance.

☐ ENJOY the sun without the jetlag in The Gambia. The Gambia Experience (01703 730888) is offering 11 nights' B&B from £299 per person, and 14 nights' B&B from £329 per person. The price includes return flights from Gatwick, transfers and taxes. Departs on April 10 or April 14.

☐ WINETRAILS (01306 712111) is offering a ski gourmet programme in Filzmoos, Austria. Seven nights' half-board for up to 12 people is £795 per person including ski hire and transfers, from April 11 to April 18. Flights can be arranged from Gatwick through Winetrails from £239 including taxes.

☐ QANTAS Holidays (0990 673464) has reduced its offer of 12 nights' accommodation-only in Thailand from £549 to £499. Four nights at the Indra Regent Hotel, Bangkok, and eight nights at the Sea Resort, Phuket. Return flights, transfers and taxes included. Departs daily from Heathrow.

☐ Warner Holidays (0870-601 6012) is offering walking holidays around the UK. Four nights' half-board at Norton Grange on the Isle of Wight is £139 per person starting on April 13, and four nights' half-board at Bodelwyddan Castle in North Wales, is £187 per person, from April 20.

☐ DESTINATION USA (0171-253 2000) is offering a new package to the Givenchy Hotel & Spa in Palm Springs. Seven nights' B&B is £929 per person until April 30. Return flights daily from Heathrow, transfers and tax included.

☐ SPEND Easter at sea: MSC (0171-637 2525) has reduced its brochure prices on the following cruises by 25 per cent. An 11-night "Rhapsody" cruise departing from Genoa and including Naples and Rhodes now costs from £997 per person and departs on April 7. A seven-night "Monterey" cruise from Genoa is from £706 per person and departs on April 9. Return flights from Heathrow, Stansted or Manchester (£55 supplement) and all port and airport taxes included.

JOANNA HUNTER

FLYING VISITS

Departures: Monday 6 April to Saturday April 11, 1998
Lowest available published fares for return travel.

Route	Promotional Fare	Flexible Fare
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London – Barcelona	£99 Debonair* (ex-Luton)	from £154 Debonair* (ex-Luton)
London – Brussels	£66 Virgin Express (ex-Heathrow/Gatwick)	£200 Sabena (ex-Heathrow/Gatwick/City)
London – Edinburgh	from £58 easyJet (ex-Luton)	£206 BA (ex-Heathrow/Gatwick)
London – Lisbon	from £154 AB Airlines (ex-Gatwick)	£398 AB Airlines (ex-Gatwick)
London – Nice	from £99 Debonair* (ex-Luton)	from £136 Debonair* (ex-Luton)
Manchester – Paris	£113 BA	£382 BA
London – Rome	from £99 Debonair* (ex-Luton)	from £175 Debonair* (ex-Luton)
Manchester – Shannon	£105 BA	£264 BA
Southampton – Zurich	£99 BA	£420 BA

Airline telephone numbers

AB Airlines 0800 4588111 — Sabena 0181-780 1444
British Airways (BA) 0345 222111 — Transavia 01293 596650
Debonair 0500 146200 — Virgin Express 0171-744 0004
easyJet 0990 292929

Notes

* Debonair fares include applicable taxes.
Prices shown in the left-hand column are the lowest published excursion fares. Prices shown in the right-hand column are the lowest available flexible fares which do not require a Saturday night stay and which, in many cases, allow changes or cancellation without penalty. In all cases, you are advised to check the restrictions, if any, when booking.
Availability is not guaranteed.

When nature calls – but the sign says 'out of order'

ESPECIALLY for explorers and mountaineers who demand the very best in personal hygiene comes the perfect travelling companion: a portable bidet. *Michael Fitzpatrick writes.*

The Japanese have invented the Travel Washlet, for use when stranded in isolated and inconvenient areas, such as the Himalayas or a motorway service station in northern France.

The battery powered bidet is filled with warm water, which can deliver a steady stream of up to 200c of water to the undercarriage for up to 30 seconds.

John Button, who scaled Mount Kilimanjaro last year, said that a heated bidet was useful when toilet facilities became fairly basic at 15,000ft.

"On the upper part of the mountain, facilities consisted of what appeared to be a fairly standard thunderbox — until you lift the lid and see that you are about to sit over a hole in a piece of wood with a sheer drop of 500ft beneath you."

The hand-held bidet costs $100 and manufacturer Toto claims that 180,000 units have already been sold.

● *For further information: Sole Convenience, 13771 Newhope Street, Garden Grove, California 92843, USA.*

When dusk falls on the historic walls of the Forbidden City, a privileged audience from around the world will be taken back in time and immersed into life at the court of ancient China. The drama of Calaf, the foreign prince who fell in love with the Emperor's cold-hearted daughter Turandot, is to be staged by director Zhang Yimou each evening between September 5th and the 13th, under the musical direction of Zubin Mehta.

This opulent production of Puccini's opera, performed in its authentic setting - in the heart of the palace at the Forbidden City of Beijing, will be an unforgettable and unique experience for all who participate in the opera event of the year.

Over the past two decades many opera companies around the world have sought permission from the Chinese authorities to perform 'Turandot' within the walls of the Forbidden City. Past requests have been refused and we are therefore delighted that through the efforts of Maestro Zubin Mehta, the Chinese government have given approval for eight performances.

In a career spanning almost forty years, Zubin Mehta has worked with the finest orchestras and opera houses and has always been attracted to unusual venues for productions. Many will remember 'Fidelio' in the amphitheatre at Caesarea and 'Tosca' in Rome's Castel Sant'Angelo and who could forget the first concerts of the 'Three Tenors'. The involvement of Zubin Mehta guarantees the highest of standards and the staging of 'Turandot' in its original setting will realise his most exotic ambition.

The total number involved in this production will reach over 1000, with over 350 from the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. Maestro Mehta, will, as always being paying great attention to the quality of the soloists. A preliminary cast list is shown within our brochure. The three times Oscar nominated Zhang Yimou will be the metteur-en-scene and the production will be very traditional, making the most of the lovely setting within the garden of the Forbidden City, with the Palace as the backdrop.

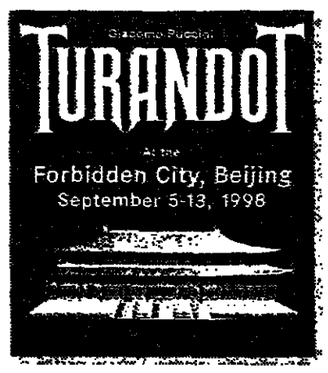
The Theatro Communale des Firenze will be responsible for the artistic direction. The expertise of its talented managers such as Francesco Ernani, best known for his role in the Arena de Verona and the Scala in Milan, together with Dottore Cezare Mazzonis, the artistic director of the Maggios who is also well known for his great success at the Scala in Milan, guarantees a first class production.

The month of September has been chosen as the most suitable time. The weather in Beijing should not be too hot and it is also a month of low rainfall.

Escorted Tours from 5 to 20 Days

Noble Caledonia has purchased tickets for all eight performances and a number of trips to China have been designed. For instance you can elect to travel on a five night visit to Beijing (from £995), or expand your visit to include Xian and the famous Terracotta Army on an eight day tour (from £1655). In addition you can add Hong Kong or even, if you prefer, join one of three comprehensive escorted tours of China which zigzags across the country from Beijing to Hong Kong.

Tours include a 'Bronze' category ticket. Supplements for higher category seats are also available.



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Standing room only all the way to Nairobi

An 'outrageous' case of overbooking raises serious questions about safety on board aircraft, **Cath Urquhart** reports

FOUR PASSENGERS on a British Airways flight from Gatwick to Nairobi had to stand all the way after the airline overbooked the flight. The two adults and two children were given cabin crew seats for take-off and landing, but for the rest of the nine-hour flight they stood near the toilets. They were offered drinks, but not meals.

Although under Civil Aviation Authority rules the airline is not thought to have broken any laws, because the passengers were strapped in during take-off and landing, a CAA spokesman said: "The CAA recommends that passengers stay in their seats, with their seatbelts on, throughout a flight unless they have to go to the toilet."

The revelations come in the week that American Airlines and United Airlines announced that they will make the wearing of seatbelts while seated compulsory throughout flights, though passengers will be allowed to move around the cabin when the seatbelt sign is turned off. The airlines' move was prompted by incidents such as that over the Pacific four months ago, in which a passenger died when a United Airlines flight from Tokyo to Honolulu dropped 1,000ft in sudden turbulence. Some types of turbulence cannot be detected by pilots in advance.

The overbooked BA flight took place in February but only came to light after one of those involved returned from a safari holiday in Kenya last month. One passenger, a 27-year-old London man who does not wish to be named as he works in the industry, said: "They had a business class seat for me, but an American passenger threw such a fit [about being bumped] that they had to let him on, despite offering him £250 to catch a later flight.

"I sat in a cabin-crew seat for take-off and landing but for the rest of the flight they were being used by the crew, so I stood. I would have preferred it if they had thrown me off altogether."

The man had a confirmed booking in Club World, BA's business section, but as he had won the trip in a competition, his ticket was a "concessionary" one, which does not give the holder the same rights as an ordinary ticket.

The man said he believed the other passengers who had to stand were a member of BA's staff and his two children.

A spokesman for the passenger watchdog body, the Air Transport Users' Council, said the incident was "outrageous". "In theory the airline is opening itself to all kinds of liability and litigation problems if these people had bumped their heads during turbulence, for example," he said. "Even if BA are within the letter of the law, morally it's a disgrace."

A SPOKESWOMAN for BA said: "The flight was over-subscribed and flew with four extra passengers who travelled in the jump seat and / or the crew rest seats. This is a discretionary option in special circumstances. Clearance for such an offer is only ever given by the captain and only ever offered with a full explanation about the restricted level of service which the passenger can expect... The option to travel in crew or jump seats is legal and only offered as a last resort."

Concerning the offer of the seat to the American passenger at the last minute, she added: "If you had paid for your ticket and were told that a passenger who had paid nothing was in your seat, how would you feel?"

The spokeswoman added that BA wished to apologise to those concerned. The safety of passengers was BA's paramount concern and overbooking, which caused the problem, was a fact of airline life, she said.

Airlines regularly overbook flights on busy routes because travellers, especially those with refundable tickets, frequently decide at the last minute to take a different flight. It is standard practice in overbooking situations to offer Denied Boarding Compensation (DBC) — which can amount to several hundred pounds on long-haul flights — to passengers prepared to take a later flight.

However, passengers with concessionary tickets are not eligible for this compensation.

The spokeswoman added: "We have to have a DBC scheme knowing that on particular routes there will be numbers of passengers who will not show up, leaving empty seats and undermining the economics of the airline."

One of Britain's favourite holiday destinations turns sour. **Tom Chesshyre** reports

ABBIE ENOCK



A beach scene in the Dominican Republic, which has been plagued with food hygiene problems. The tourism minister suggested Germans cope better with the country than Britons

Can we stand the heat?

British travellers may not be experienced enough to cope with conditions in the Dominican Republic, according to the Caribbean island's tourism minister.

On a visit to London this week, intended to quell concerns about poor levels of health and hygiene at hotels, Félix Feliucho Jiménez, the Minister of Tourism, suggested illness problems suffered by British tourists could have been caused by naivety on the part of the visitors.

"I visited Germany recently and not one journalist referred to any problems to do with food or illness," he said. "I have to say that the German market must be made up of holidaymakers who are more used to long-haul travel. Germans are more accustomed to a tropical climate because they've been travelling for years."

His comments come after tour operator figures showed that 60 per cent of British tourists visiting the island last year suffered some form of illness, including diarrhoea (the most common), typhoid, cholera, dysentery and legionnaire's disease. Two operators — Inspirations and Flying Colours — pulled out entirely last autumn and Airtours cancelled holidays for 10,000 people last month. So many holidaymakers have complained that the breakfast show *GMTV* has now launched a campaign for improvements.

This week, one travel consumer group said that Mr Jiménez was making light of the problems. Brenda Wall, who runs consumer group Holiday Travelwatch and has received more than 15,000 complaints about the Dominican Republic from holidaymakers, said: "It is ridiculous to suggest that British tourists are coming down with illnesses more than German tourists. When I visited the island I met plenty of Germans who were suffering.

"The problem is that hygiene conditions are poor at many hotels. People are served buffet-style meals out in the open near rubbish bins. Flies from the bins then contaminate the food. There should be a halt to all tourism until these conditions are sorted out."

Such a move is not on the agenda, but Mr Jiménez announced measures to improve health and hygiene conditions. More than £62 million is being spent to improve water treatment and sewage disposal over the next two years and hotel staff are being trained in food handling and preparation.

As reported on these pages in February, hotels on the island are also taking part in Cristal, a food preparation and management programme backed by British tour operators. If hotels do not meet the required standards, operators will be informed and the hotels could be dropped from brochures.

Improvements are already being made; latest figures show that 30 per cent of visitors to the country are now suffering illness, down 30 per cent on last year. "I'm glad something positive is being done," said Alan Flook, general secretary of the Federation of Tour Operators. "The island is just the latest tourist destination having to go through this process of improving hygiene conditions: Spain did it 40 years ago and Turkey more recently."

The Dominican Republic is now Britain's second most popular long-haul destination (Florida is No. 1) — 216,000 holidaymakers visited last year.

Ms Wall said: "It is a beautiful island, but it's not so beautiful when you've got a stomach bug. Health and hygiene conditions need to be improved quickly or the same problems will recur this year."

Travellers' hygiene tips: don't drink tap water or brush your teeth in tap water, don't have ice in drinks, make sure cooked food is hot, not lukewarm, peel your own fruit.

● *The Dominican Republic Tourist Board in London has been closed since early February but is due to re-open within the next couple of weeks.*

Going, going gone for landmarkers

A millennium auction provokes an outcry, **Tom Chesshyre** writes

Regular customers are "disgusted" by the Landmark Trust's decision this week to auction off its properties to the highest bidder for millennium parties on New Year's Eve 1999.

Anyone who wants to book a property must pay the basic rental rate and also make a donation to one of the Trust's charity funds, which will be spent on either restoring an historic house or building stone walls and repairing footpaths in the country.

Regulars — nicknamed landmarkers — believe the cost of renting a property for New Year's Eve will go sky-high, pricing out all but the most well-off.

Judith Sargent, from Shoreham-by-Sea in West Sussex, has being holidaying at Landmark Trust properties with her family for more than ten years.

"We really wanted to book a large historic house for a millennium party," she said, "but we won't bother now because it will probably be very expensive.

"The whole attraction of Landmark Trust for us is that it makes these wonderful houses available to those who could not afford to own them. This auction means that only the very rich will be able to enjoy the millennium in them."

But a spokeswoman for the Landmark Trust, a conservation charity established to restore derelict historic buildings, pointed out that bidding on its 166 properties is only open to those who are already on its books.

"The problem is that there are 60,000 people who have used our buildings before. So we decided that inviting donations would be a good way of raising money to rescue more buildings."



Egyptian House in Penzance, Cornwall, a Landmark Trust property

She added that the chances of anyone getting a property were "always small. The first inquiries about millennium bookings were made 15 years ago."

Landmarkers must make their bids by May 15; a second batch of properties will be released for auction later in the year.

In the first batch, the cheapest basic property rate is £139 and the most expensive £1,381 for a four-night millennium's eve stay. Three properties are being put in a prize draw, with the winners staying free.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Passport prices

TRAVELLERS applying for passports in person will now pay £10. Previously, there was no charge. The price of a standard ten-year passport rose this week by £3 to £21, while a 48-page passport rises by £4 to £31. Charges were last raised in November, 1992.

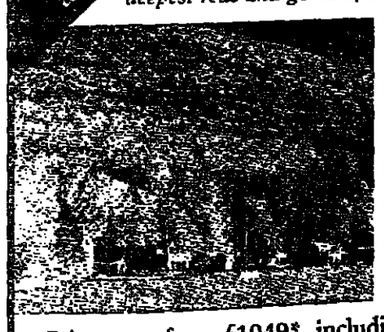
TV travel agent

THE FIRST travel agency on television opens at midday today. The Travel Shop, a member of the Association of British Travel Agents, will broadcast live to 6.5 million cable and satellite households, with 24-hour bookings. Details: 0845-600 3040.

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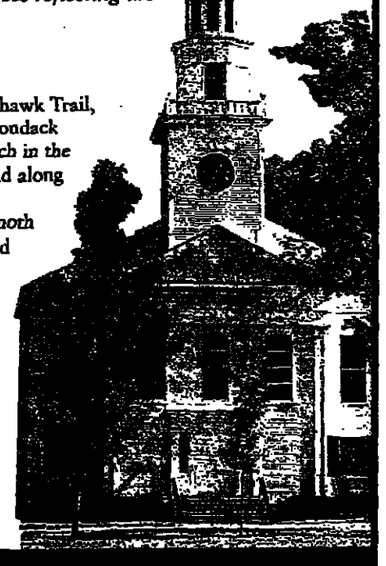
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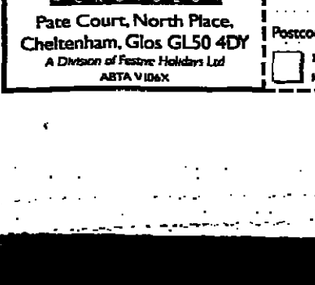
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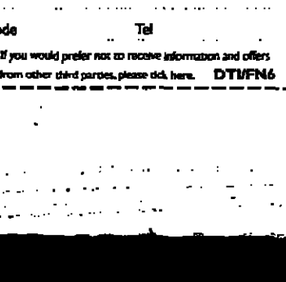
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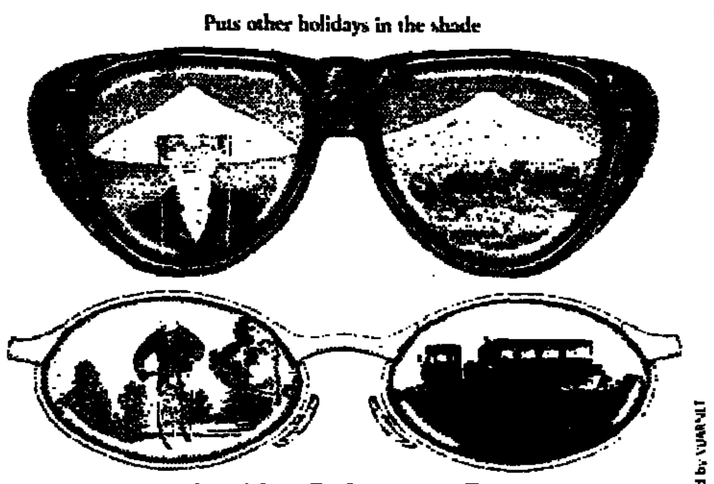
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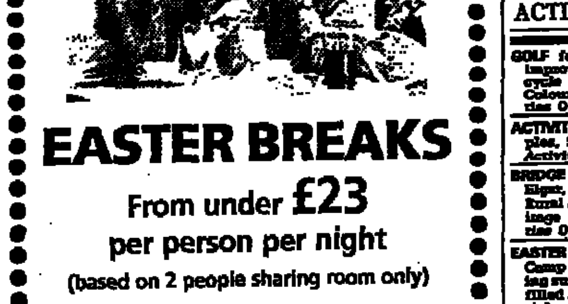
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CARING professional male, 39, 6' tall, slim, good physique, good-looking, solid-type, loves to pamper a lady's feet, seeks lasting relationship with very dominant, bossy, demanding, intelligent, slim, very attractive, 30-50 years old woman with lovely legs and beautiful feet. Do you want to be loved, adored, worshipped by a romantic man who will devote himself to your every whim and wait on you hand and foot? Have your feet massaged and caressed at the mere snap of your fingers. If you want to be treated like a Goddess every day, then we could be made for each other. Written reply preferred. Photo appreciated. North West/ Derbyshire/ Cheshire. Box No 1971

CORA - Please ring Allan, I have met your perfect partner. 01432 342204.

EARLY 40s, handsome gentleman single guy, well toned physically and culturally seeking stylish and sensual lady for adventure. Candlelit dinner specialist, breakfast optional (reservations for Tuesdays considered). Midlands/North West. Box no 1964

FIT, tall, soft-centred 41 year old. I love the adventure that is life, cooking yummy Tai Chi, walking, travel, the real Spain. Speak Spanish and English fluently, fit head & mobile. WLTM compatible NS woman. Letters only please. Bx 1992

HAMPSHIRE/W Sussex 'Elite' Local, personal special discount. Dorothy 01489 885700

FELL my life with laughter WLTM 40s 5'9+ fit n/s London White + photo to stalking female who turns heads. Box not that special need Bx 1701

FRIENDS say - you're fun, sparkling, intelligent with many interests but who will you bring to our dinner/theatre parties? Ex divorcee bus/prof lady, slim, fair, attractive appearance is seeking similar wonderful, genuine, n/s 50s+ man. Interests could include philosophy. The Arts, sport, enthusiasm for travel but compatible chemistry a necessity. Wessex based but flexible Letters appreciated Bx 1767

FULL of fun and rather special, elegant, blonde, late 40s. Needs spoiling by kind successful gentleman, 45-60. Please please Combs. Box 1696

GENUINELY gorgeous green eyed blonde, 36, 5'8, with sparkling smile and personality to match seeks tall, trusty man with broad shoulders for life partner. If you are kind, sincere, equally at home on trendiest of Twickenham or with Turner at the Tate and have a sense of mischief and a zest for life and romance then please write with photo to Box 1773

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ALONE on holiday? Join a Genuine house party on a schooner in Turkey for a hot sun drenched holiday, with glorious food, watersports and happy music. Disco optional. Call Neil Day/Dreams 0171 631 4484

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GOOD fun, fit, stylish & sporty entrepreneur (40 something) seeks very attractive, slim, stylish, curvy, sexy, adventurous lady for great times, laughter, wining/ dining, travel & possible relationship. A recent photo appreciated. Box No 1931

HANDSOME, 6' slim, interesting, gentle and romantic man. Very young looking 55, seeks pretty, shapely and caring lady with sparkle for friendship/ romance. Photo and letter please. London area.Bx 1995

HANDSOME (so I'm told), 30's, 5'10", blond, blue eyes, sporty, prof, good, happy disposition, seeks beautiful, slim lady for friendship initially. Photo appreciated. Mids. Box No 2012

LAWYER, North East/ N. Yorks, attractive, GSOH, mid 40's, divorced, no ties, 6'0", wants to get out to enjoy life & fall in love with slim, attractive, cuddly lady, nothing lost in dropping me a line. Photo appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 1948

NOTTS/Leics/Lincs/Derbys Elite. 100's of attractive, articulate men, all ages, seeking quality ladies. Call Elite on 0116 287 6104 for free info

PROFESSIONAL male, 44, seeks n/s female kindred spirit to share dinners, theatre, music, conversation, country walks & pubs, enchanting days out & foreign travel. Honesty/style. Please Reply to Box No 1942

RICHMOND Kingston Esher Elite +25 mile radius 100's of members 0181 580 0028 7 days

SALISBURY, Swindon, Bath, Bristol Call Club Encounters 0800 141 141.

TALL, dark, v. attractive lawyer, own home, 42, n/s, fit, youthful. Likes art, music, travel, France/Italy, wine, animals, family, learning, many sports. Retaining youngness, amusing, practical, and romantic. Looking for a partner, friend and lover, who must be stimulating, broad-minded, intelligent, perceptive, easy-going, and really attractive. London & North. Please phone, ans. Box No 2012

WEST Country, Taunton, Exeter, Torquay, Plymouth. Call Club Encounters 0800 141 141.

TALL, fun-loving, attractive, 40ish male WLTM reasonably slim, attractive, well-read, responsible lady. Listen to my message for more details: 2002

YOU: Pretty, witty, near City (London) & free again. Me: Over educated, over endowed, 6'2 in the hill, but fun, time & money. Photo please. Box No 2007

Zzzzz... wake up! Club Encounters is open every day. Call us now free on 0800 141141.

SPRING is now here, with a song and a smile, and thoughts now hopefully turning to look and feeling, somewhere, that special delightful good looking n/s romantic lady, with a loving smile and sunny ways, who is active and enjoys life to the full, with GSOH. A little sophistication, touched with elegance and style, who with the right chemistry, will bring back that real sparkle and a new romance into a lasting relationship, full of affection and TLC. Enjoying much of town evenings, theatre, but love talk to drying the dishes or walking in the Lake District, or walking in Amsterdam's. In the meantime, to make it all that little, whilst encompassing romance, music, theatre, dancing, conversation, walking, travel, the home and much more, with a retired Cheshire widower, a very young looking and active 54 year old, 5ft 11inch, fit, with a good life style. Who would appreciate a genuine reply, with a recent photo (returned) and allowing the man to take the next step. Reply to Box 1802

GENTLE, tactile man, retired, very lonely widower, WLTM attractive, intelligent, petite lady, 50-60 for friendship/ relationship. Could share both days or whatever the lady wishes. N. London/ Herts. Please appreciated. Box No 1

GOLFER. Lasting relationship need love in common. Are you attractive, perhaps a professional person bored with life's pressures, seeking simply, quality golf, likes sun & travel, theatre, music & dining out, willing to have shared & have a go? - age 50-57 & looking for a lifetime partner on & off the links. Letter & photo please. Please Reply to Box No 1440

GOOD LOOKING genuine English gent, early 50's, 6ft, 12st, 32, looks much younger, n/s, solvent, own house, car, good job, no long ups, 2 teenage children, seeks slim lady of same. Enjoys dining out, travel, theatre etc. WLTM attractive, very slim woman, 42-48, very genuine, warm, romantic, unattached, to what it does, treat with etc. Photo appreciated please. Box No 1604

GOOD LOOKING man, 44, music lover, gardener, various outdoor interests, seeks attractive, genuine lady, 30-40, for friendship, tenderness, joyful romps & lasting relationship. London area. Letter please. Box No 1382

THE TIMES
cannot guarantee that responsibility will confirm reply to boxes mentioned in ads on this page, although we hope that as a matter of courtesy they will. When making contact with people for the first time it is advisable to meet in a public place and let a member of your family or a friend know where you will be. We would advise readers and advertisers to consider caution when giving out personal details. This will be respected by genuine respondents.

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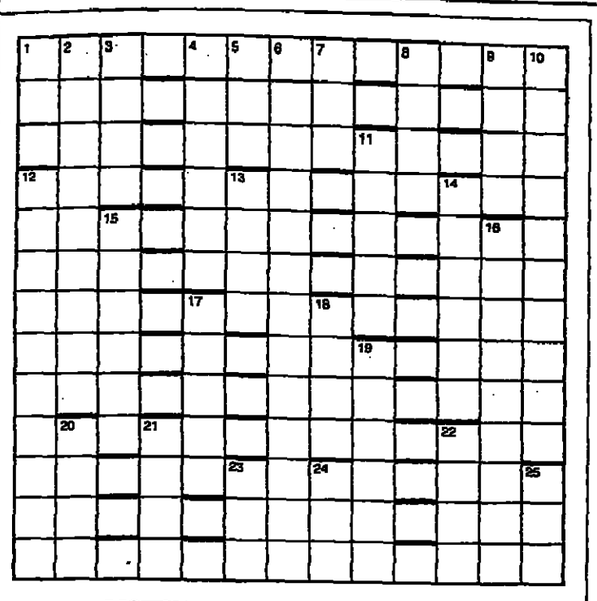
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THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No 3456: Spot the Theme by Third Man



ONLY THE horizontal bars are shown: to complete the puzzle solvers are required not only to enter a letter in each square as usual but also to insert the vertical bars, which are such that the grid would appear the same if *turned upside down. All clues are normal and are presented in normal order, except that four across clues lead* to solutions from which a thematic element must be removed before they are entered in the grid and six thematic five-letter across lights (one of them consisting of two words) are unclued; spotting the theme will enable solvers to complete the puzzle.

ACROSS

The French adored Thatcher? That's out of the question!
Typified by characters that stand out, like volunteers
appearing in an outlandish trick
Street bisected by a Roman square — indeed a perfect example of the genre
Add Aaron and a *mitre together* for a —— *rodman*
Vote with an X — or maybe with an imprint of the . . .
Thumb, Lydia: that puts it simply
The grain harvest from (the heart of) an (unlikely) Asian country
French creator of a series gets *his* laughs by flipping his lid? Just the opposite! (2 words)
Trial state of separation initially after tying the knot in her teens
A game that involves a skittle
I come out of my shell; just a semi-appearance transforms me
Of itself a feature of casuistry
Wet, even if one's not dysphonic
A mass of ice cream's melting its mass away
Brings old iron to smithy initially
In the French army corporal punishment is administered here
You'll find me inside undies — one of many there if you're not patient!
Bones filling most of a pit
In a state shortly before filial generation (2 words)
More than half of a hoof is a horny plate
By being sliced fresh ryebread's crisp when fried
After dousing the source of blazing flames we'll bring you the ashes
A secret schemer, descendant of Irish American broncobuster, perhaps
The shape of one letter or of another

DOWN

1 Cabaret turn? No mere cabaret turn (3)
2 The British equivalent of the US bike in gold produces a speculator (9)
3 *You could find this in a small Scottish loch?* (4)
4 Regularly buy and sell (6)
5 A *drink? Only a single* (3)
6 Like a form of line traced erratically round grain crop in the past (13)
7 The penultimate letter of the alphabet is encapsulated by Y (3)
8 Hostility marks such a reception (4)
9 Israel abuses me as a type of Asian moolah (4)
10 Strippers? Yes, first item of dress is cast off (10)
11 Coins of high quality in former use? Just so — or just the opposite (5)
12 With a touch of pity not sadism do spare the rod: I've grown up with a very thin skin (10)
13 Wee Free Churchman perhaps? Wrong. Compatriot of Wee Free (4)
14 English queen espousing early English clothes in early times (6)
15 Troublesome acne — it offers palliative (6)
16 Discoloration in most leather is sanctioned (9)
17 Once a means of preserving the last of the local strain (5)
18 Design tartan mat with lower half reflected (4)
19 Tea from China, or another country, Uruguay (6)
20 You'll find unfinished under finished (4)
21 Banks are into telecommunications equipment (4)
22 Spur on back of leg rubs on pinions (4)
23 Drink — *the drink's where you'll find me with wife in tow* (3)
24 Electric current bridging the gap in the middle? Right (3)
25 Half a set of 6, and 1 per cent of 9 (3)

LISTENER CROSSWORD No 3456
in association with Waterstone's

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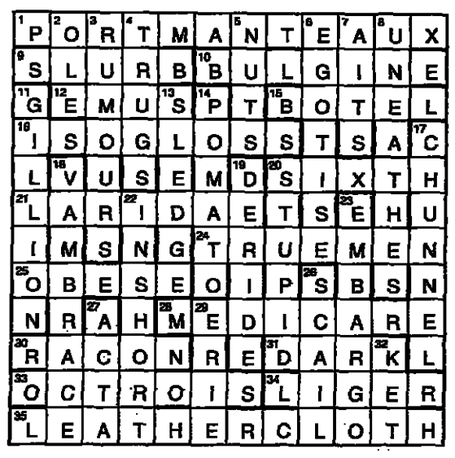
Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Listener Crossword No 3456, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 6HE, by Thursday, April 16.

W
WATERSTONE'S

The winner will receive a Waterstone's book token worth £75. Five *runners-up* will each receive a book token worth £10



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Solution and Notes for No. 3453
The Inbetweenies by Theod

The thematic clues all lead to answers which are IA, "clued" by the letters omitted from the two words that form the portmanteau.

ACROSS
9 sIUM/SUBurb
10 bulL/ENgine
15 boAT/HOtel
28 mediCAL/care
30 raDAR/BEAcon
34 liON/TIger

DOWN
11 giGA/Million
14 poTATO/TOmato
17 chANNEL/Tunnel

The winner is Mrs H. Rogers, of Swaffham, Norfolk. *The runners up are* C.G. Laking, of Hampton Hill, London; Maurice Zeegen, of Eastcote, London; J. Conon of Thamesmead, *London; R.F. Zobel, of Watchfield, Swindon,* K.T. Norcott, of Cheltenham, Gloucester.

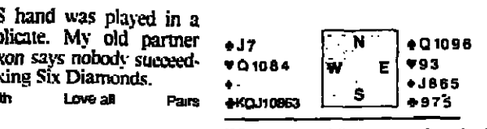
● *For 1997 crossword statistics and personal records send a 110mmx220mm SAE to J.E. Green, c/o 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Herts AL3 6HE. Please keep separate from puzzle entries.*

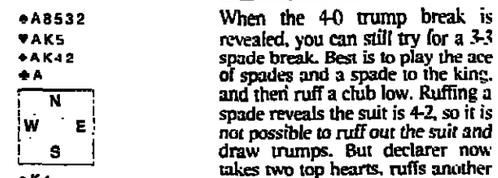
BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

TODAY'S hand was played in a club duplicate. My old partner *Chris Dixon says* nobody succeeded in making Six Diamonds.

Dealer North — Love all — Pairs



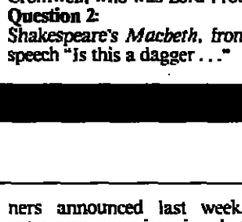


Contract: Six Diamonds by South
Lead: king of clubs

After North opens Two Clubs and South responds Two Diamonds, West comes in with Three Clubs. Thereafter North-South have an uninterrupted sequence to Six Diamonds. It is a good contract — there are ten top tricks and if trumps are 2-2 there are two ruffs in dummy: if trumps are 3-1, the twelfth trick may come by setting up the fifth spade. Even if the spades do not *behave, there are chances in hearts.*

So after winning the club lead it is correct to start by laying down the ace of diamonds. On this West shows out, discarding a club. If you play on spades East turns up with four. Try it yourself from here before reading on. The East-West *cards are shown at the top of the* next column.

When the 4-0 trump break is revealed, you can still try for a 3-3 spade break. Best is to play the ace of spades and a spade to the king, and then ruff a club low. Ruffing a spade reveals the suit is 4-2, so it is *not possible to ruff out the suit and* draw trumps. But declarer now takes two top hearts, ruffs another spade and exits with a third heart. That leaves this position:



West is on lead, but it would be the same if East was. There is no way *defence can stop declarer making* three more tricks on a crossruff.

Did you spot the critical play? It was taking the club ruff early. If you play ace, king and another heart before taking the club ruff, West plays a fourth heart. East discards his clubs on the third and *fourth rounds, and dummy's small* trump never scores.

WORD ANSWERS

Answers from page 40

GAWSY
(c) Well dressed and/or jolly-looking. The word is of unknown origin, but may be Scottish. It appears in the book *Edinburgh's Salute to Lord Carnarvon* in 1720: " I look nae half sae gawsy."

GROUZE
(a) To devour or eat with a crunching sound: "I can't abide him, he growses his meat like a pig." The South Cheshire Glossary of 1887 gives a fuller definition: "To munch, e.g. walnuts or anything else of which the crunching sound can be heard in the process. Thus we might speak of pigs grouzing raw potatoes."

GRUNCH
(b) To grumble, to object or to express discontent. The term is of some age, as it appears to originate from the 15th century: "Meek in troubill, glad in powerte. . . Neuir grunching, bot mery lik thi degre."

GUILLEMIN
(a) The name given to a hermit of the *order founded by the followers of St* William during the 12th century.

TWO BRAINS

Answers from page 40
Question 1:
Churchill, Macmillan, Wilson and Callaghan were all British Prime Ministers. The odd one out is Cromwell, who was Lord Protector
Question 2:
Shakespeare's Macbeth, from the speech "Is this a dagger . . ."

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

THIS year's Varsity match between Oxford and Cambridge seemed to be heading for a rare draw. Oxford finally gained victory when grandmaster Dharshan Kumaran outplayed his less experienced opponent. Here are the results; the respective colleges of players are in brackets and Oxford is mentioned first.

Dharshan Kumaran (Green) beat Mark Ferguson (Queen's) 1-0;
Jonathan Rowson (Keble) beat Brian Kelly (Trinity) 1-0;
Boyan Tonkov (Jesus) was beaten by Harriet Hunt (St John's) 0-1;
Maxim Deveroaux (Brasenose) tied with Aron Cohen (Queen's) Draw;
Aleksander Trifunovic (St Anne's) tied with David Moskovic (Queen's) Draw;
Oliver Rosten (Somerville) beat Jack Rudd (Girton) 1-0;
Joel Ouaknine (St Cross) beat Ben Morgan (Magdalene) 1-0;
Emily Howard (Lincoln) was beaten by Stuart White (Jesus) 0-1;
Total: 5-3

White: Mark Ferguson; Black: Dharshan Kumaran
Varsity Match 1998
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5
3 e5 c5

This is dubious, since Black has difficulties in regaining his pawn. *The normal move is 3 . . . Bf5.*

4 dxc5 e6 5 Be3 Nh6
6 c3 Nc6 7 Bb5 Bd7
8 Bxc6

If White wishes to retain his pawn, *this is essential. If instead 8 f4 then* 8 . . . Nxe5 recaptures the pawn in any case, the tactics working out in Black's favour.

8 . . . Bxc6 9 Nf3 Nf5
10 Bd4 a5 11 0-0 a4
12 Nbd2 g5 13 g4

Weakens White's kingside but he hopes to fend off Black's bishops.

13 . . . Nxd4 14 cxd4 h5
15 h3 hxg4 16 hxg4 Qc7
17 Kg2 0-0-0 18 b4

Seizing a second pawn by 18 Nxg5 would be risky after 18 . . . Bh6 followed by . . . Rdg8. White *should be trying to reduce Black's* kingside counterplay, eg. by Rh1.

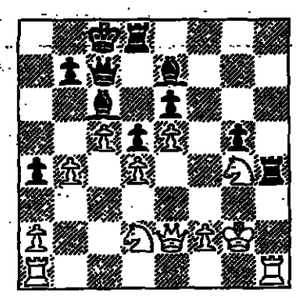
18 . . . f5

The beginning of ominous counterplay for if 19 exf6 then 19 . . . Qf4.

19 Rh1 Be7 20 Qe2

Plausible, but he is setting himself up for a nasty trap.

20 . . . fxg4 21 Nh2 Rh4
22 Nxg4



Now comes the horrible surprise.

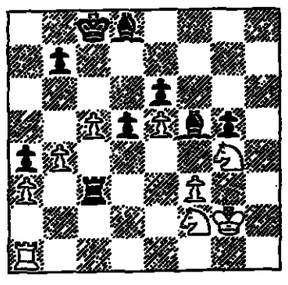
22 . . . Bb5

An unpleasant activation of an apparently dead piece. After 23 Qxb5 Rxg4+ Black is well in the game, so White must retreat.

23 Qd1 Rf8 24 f3 Bd8
25 Nf1 Qf7 26 Nfh2 Qf4
27 a3 Rfh8 28 Qg1 Bd3
29 Qf2 Bf5 30 Qg3

White surrenders his extra pawn.

30 . . . Qxd4 31 Rad1 Qb2+
32 Qf2 Qxf2+ 33 Nxf2 Rc4
34 Nhg4 Rxh1 35 Rxh1 Rc3
36 Ra1



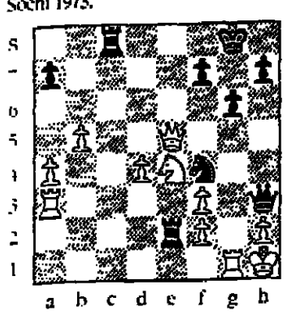
With Black's attack reduced after the exchange of queens and with material equality, White's blockade must have given him ideas of salvation. But Black's next move ruptures the queenside phalanx after which the fierce activity of Black's bishops guarantees victory.

36 . . . b6 37 cxb6 Bxb6
38 Kg3 Bd4 39 Rd1 Bb6
40 Ra1 Bd4 41 Rd1 Bxf2+
42 Nxf2 Rxa3
White resigns

WINNING MOVE

by Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Spiridonov — Krogius, Sochi 1973.



Black is two pawns down but has fantastic compensation as his pieces are all very active and White's kingside is badly broken up. How did Black demonstrate the advantages of *his position?*

The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society. Answers, on a postcard please, addressed to Winning Move competition, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, *London* E1 9XN.

The answer will be published next Saturday.

Solution to last week's competition:
1 Bf6
The winner is Peter Petrie, of Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott

ONE OF the biggest names in video gaming is also its most curvaceous and stylish — *Tomb Raider's* Lara Croft. Today the luscious Lara joins Weekend for the competition that diehard *Tomb Raider* fans have been waiting for. Cyberspace Forty-Two offers £5,000 worth of prizes, including exclusive Lara Croft memorabilia and stacks of bestselling Eidos Interactive titles.

For the past two years, Lara Croft's graceful run at the top of global gaming charts has made her one of the country's best exports. For her British owner, Eidos Interactive, she is the jewel in its increasingly impressive line-up of titles. Eidos has reinvested profits well and 1998 promises to be a bumper year for the company.

Its Tomb Raider business aside for a moment, it has already released the great-looking flight simulator *Flight Unlimited II*. Next up — and in stores imminently — will be *Deathtrap Dungeon*, a slick Doom-style caper, and by the autumn it should release the long-awaited PC conversion of last Christmas's Japanese PlayStation hit, *Final Fantasy VII*.

But Eidos's biggest asset remains the phenomenally successful Tomb Raider brand and those rich pickings keep pouring in. For months even Hollywood has been trying to woo Lara Croft, and Eidos Interactive recently announced that the busty Brit has been snapped up by Paramount Pictures. Now the Lara Croft movie vehicle is being rushed into production while the search is on to cast the perfect Lara. Frontrunners are said to include Liz Hurley and Rhona Mitra who *presents the Pepsi Chart Show.*

Meanwhile, sales of the games continue to soar. Now shipping with PC CD-Rom copies of *Tomb Raider II* is a special-edition merchandising pack: *Lethal, Loaded and Irresistible: Everything You Ever Wanted From Lara Croft*. As well as the sequel game, this includes a Lara T-shirt, Lara mousemat, Lara playing cards, Lara pictures and a Lara sticker. But Weekend is going not one but three times better for Cyberspace Forty-Two, as three lucky readers will scoop the ultimate in Lara Croft chic.



Tomb Raider's star Lara Croft joins Weekend for Cyberspace Forty-Two

First, our trio will receive an A3 Lara Croft artwork original, like a cartoon or storyboard used in making the game, signed and framed. Next, each gets a limited-edition Lara Croft flying jacket. The brown leather jacket has a picture of Lara painted on the back and is worth £200. Our winners will also pick up the *Lethal Loaded and Irresistible* pack plus a further ten great Eidos Interactive titles — a mix of PlayStation and PC CD-Rom formats for optimum family fun.

Even our ten runners-up will walk away with magnificent prize bundles. They will each receive a *navy blue Eidos Interactive fleece* jacket plus the same software stacks as our main winners.

Cyberspace Forty-Two is Hal's Revenge — Two Thousand and Gone, the dreamchild of reader Jim Byrne from Liverpool, one of our three Cyberspace Forty-One winners announced last week. To enter, you must imagine that you are on a life-support machine and HAL, "the thinking computer", *decides to turn you off. You have* four minutes to convince him to turn you back on. In no more than 150 words, continue the following conversation in the funniest possible way: "*Don't do it. HAL . . .*"

Equally important is the second part of the competition. Who would you deem most unsuitable to play Lara Croft in the live action movie *spin-off* and why? So far, suggestions in the office have ranged from Melinda Messenger, Christine Hamilton and Janet Street-Porter to Eddie Izzard and Michael Jackson.

Your entry must include your name, address and telephone number. Since *Tomb Raider II* carries a 15 certificate, if you are younger please get your parents' permission before entering and include your age in your details. Postal entries *should be sent to* Cyberspace Forty-Two, Computer Games and Pastimes, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. E-mail entries should be sent to cyber@dircon.co.uk. The competition closes on Tuesday, April 21. *Times competition rules apply.*

NEW SOFTWARE

ABLE TO hover at speeds over land or water, in reality a jet bike would be terrific fun to play with, especially in open landscapes with few dangerous obstacles like rocks and mountains.

Sadly in **jet rider 2**, for the PlayStation, the tracks tend to be littered with natural obstacles so that the racing experience is treacherous rather than tantalising.

There are plenty of choices. Some jet bikes are all acceleration and no handling but one or two are better balanced. The courses all look good and can be raced against a human or computer opponent. Head into curved bends at speed and talented players somersault spectacularly before gracefully continuing on their way while others will crash and the rider will be flung from the machine, costing valuable seconds. Here it seems certain that less would have been more.

Instead of so many increasingly tricky courses, for example, just once a flat and open arena should have been included. There is also scope for some good collectibles to add pep, like power ups and ways of arming riders with weapons or more imaginative tricks — gas bombs to slow down or temporarily freeze others would work well.

■ **Verdict: 6 out of 10. Tricky jet bike racing game. £34.99.**



Take the bends in jet rider 2

WHEN Activision released **Mech Warrior** a couple of years back it was the first of a spate of games with clanking, strolling monsters which spat bullets and rockets at each other.

The idea was intriguing but fell short of perfection because the thudding metallic Frankensteins, with bolts everywhere, were tough to manoeuvre smoothly. Mech Warrior II addressed the problem to some extent but still you felt as if you were going into battle wearing Centrepoint.

Activision's latest spin in this genre is Heavy Gear, in which the walking fighting machines are *smaller and decidedly more nimble* in the battlefield. Now they can even bend, despite being made from steel, or crouch down if necessary. The robotic rambos come armed to the hilt with missiles, cannons and armour and you can even tailor one to your exact needs in the construction editor, hand-picking all the components to make the fighter of your dreams.

The game accommodates one or more players. The one-player mission mode becomes fairly pedestrian in parts but is perfect for mastering the art of combat in Heavy Gear. Nothing beats head-to-head battles in multiplayer mode, though.

Either way, the improved agility of the mechs means much more strategic gameplay on the battlefield.

■ **Verdict: 8 out of 10. Armoured walking on the wild side in a fine combat action sim. £34.99.**

SOLUTION TO JUMBO CROSSWORD 156

U	N	E	M	P	L	O	Y	M	E	N	T	B	E	N	E	F	I	T	■	B	A	L	K	A	N	S
P	■	M	■	A	■	L	■	I	■	E	■	E	■	O	■	I	■	A	■	U	■	O	■	F	■	T
S	U	P	E	R	B	O	W	L	■	O	P	T	I	C	A	L	■	C	A	R	N	I	V	O	R	A
E	■	T	■	T	■	G	■	K	■	G	■	E	■	A	■	L	■	E	■	Y	■	R	■	R	■	N
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L	■	■	■	P	■	A	■	■	■	I	■	O	■	■	■	U	■	I	■	S	■	O	■	R	■	O
O	V	E	R	A	R	M	■	M	I	C	R	O	S	C	O	P	I	C	■	H	A	D	R	I	A	N
W	■	S	■	T	■	E	■	A	■	■	■	L	■	O	■	■	■	I	■	E	■	E	■	■	■	E
I	N	T	R	I	C	A	C	Y	■	T	I	G	O	N	■	S	U	N	D	A	Y	T	I	M	E	S
N	■	R	■	N	■	T	■	T	■	R	■	A	■	T	■	T	■	■	■	D	■	I	■	I	■	O
G	L	A	S	G	O	W	■	R	O	I	S	T	E	R	E	R	■	H	E	I	R	A	T	L	A	W
Y	■	N	■	■	■	H	■	E	■	S	■	H	■	A	■	A	■	O	■	N	■	■	■	L	■	N
O	R	G	A	N	P	I	P	E	■	E	M	E	N	D	A	T	O	R	■	T	E	M	P	E	S	T
U	■	E	■	O	■	C	■	■	■	C	■	R	■	I	■	U	■	R	■	H	■	O	■	N	■	W
R	I	D	I	N	G	H	A	B	I	T	■	I	N	C	U	S	■	I	N	E	X	T	E	N	S	O
O	■	■	■	P	■	T	■	O	■	■	■	N	■	T	■	■	■	F	■	S	■	H	■	I	■	F
W	I	C	K	L	O	W	■	R	E	L	I	G	I	O	U	S	L	Y	■	A	C	E	T	A	T	E
N	■	O	■	U	■	O	■	E	■	O	■	■	■	R	■	O	■	■	■	N	■	R	■	■	■	E
T	R	U	S	S	■	C	U	R	I	O	S	I	T	Y	K	I	L	L	E	D	T	H	E	C	A	T
R	■	P	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	S	■	M	■	■	■	D	■	A	■	■	■	U	■	O	■	■
U	N	D	E	F	I	N	A	B	L	E	■	P	I	A	N	I	S	T	■	P	A	B	U	L	U	M
M	■	E	■	R	■	P	■	O	■	N	■	R	■	S	■	S	■	V	■	I	■	B	■	O	■	O
P	O	T	B	O	I	L	E	R	■	E	R	O	T	I	C	A	■	I	N	T	R	A	N	S	I	T
E	■	A	■	Z	■	A	■	N	■	S	■	V	■	A	■	N	■	A	■	T	■	R	■	S	■	T
T	O	T	T	E	R	Y	■	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	S	T	A	N	D	A	R	D	T	I	M	E

The winner of an Alfred Dunhill AD2000, worth £125, is Mrs S.M. Crowe, of Leigh on Sea, Essex

MODERN MANNERS

by John Morgan

Send your queries to Morgan's Modern Manners, The Times, Weekend, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN

Q When my wife and I go to restaurants with friends, the bill is usually divided between us. But after we have paid our share, some friends ask if we can "use" the bill; when we say we cannot, they pick up the bill themselves. Other acquaintances pocket the bill surreptitiously. In both cases, the aim appears to be use a social event to inflate an expenses claim. It is hard not to be miffed that they are claiming the cost of our meals as well as their own. The money we spend represents a bonus in their pockets — albeit at their employers' expense. Are we wrong to be irritated? — Name and address withheld.

A You are not wrong to disapprove of this little scam. Harold Nicolson said that manners are minor morals and your story illustrates his point perfectly. Your friends' conduct shows bad manners and even worse ethics, as they are not only guilty of corporate theft, but also of profiteering from their friends. A simple way to prevent it (admittedly at the risk of being unpopular) is by taking the initiative. For instance, if somebody asks "Do you want the bill?", you reply, "Oh no, absolutely not, we are all paying our own way tonight," while deftly picking it up and tearing it in half.



Q I was with my mother in the park recently when we met an acquaintance who was accompanied by two friends. The acquaintance and I exchanged a few words as we passed but I did not introduce my mother, nor my chum her friends. Should we have made introductions? — Jessica Grayson (Mrs), Wallingford, Oxon.

A Times have changed since Lady Troubridge, the doyenne of prewar manners, declared: "Introductions on the street are bad form unless there is some special reason for them." Nowadays, in the street, the train or the park, if more than just a few passing words are exchanged it is always polite to make quick introductions.

Q I was always told that those who did not know any better invited friends for "a coffee" whereas those who did know the form invited you to "coffee". In *The Archers*, it is therefore hardly surprising that Shula (and most of the others) invite everyone for "a coffee". However, it is surprising that Caroline Pemberton (who is definitely top drawer) also issues invitations to "a coffee" and surely she ought to know better? Are the writers unaware of this fine social distinction? — Ian Blake, Wester-Ross, Scotland.

A For all their excellent qualities, *The Archers* could never be described as high-flyers on the sophisticated front. For this reason, although the good people of Ambridge may well drop in for "a coffee", it is still usual in smarter circles for coffee to be offered without the indefinite article.

Q When we have people to dinner my husband always says effusively after we have eaten "thank you, darling, that was delicious". But I don't like him to do this because it appears as though he is prompting the other guests, and indeed they all rush to agree. I know the other guests are going to say it anyway, and indeed may have commented during the meal. Am I being super-sensitive? — Maureen N. Crossley, Higher Disley, Cheshire.

A No modern dinner party is complete without a flourish of culinary compliments. However, it is true to say that your husband's appreciative remarks, although well meant, are gauche when said in front of your guests. His praise should be privately and personally expressed when the party has left.

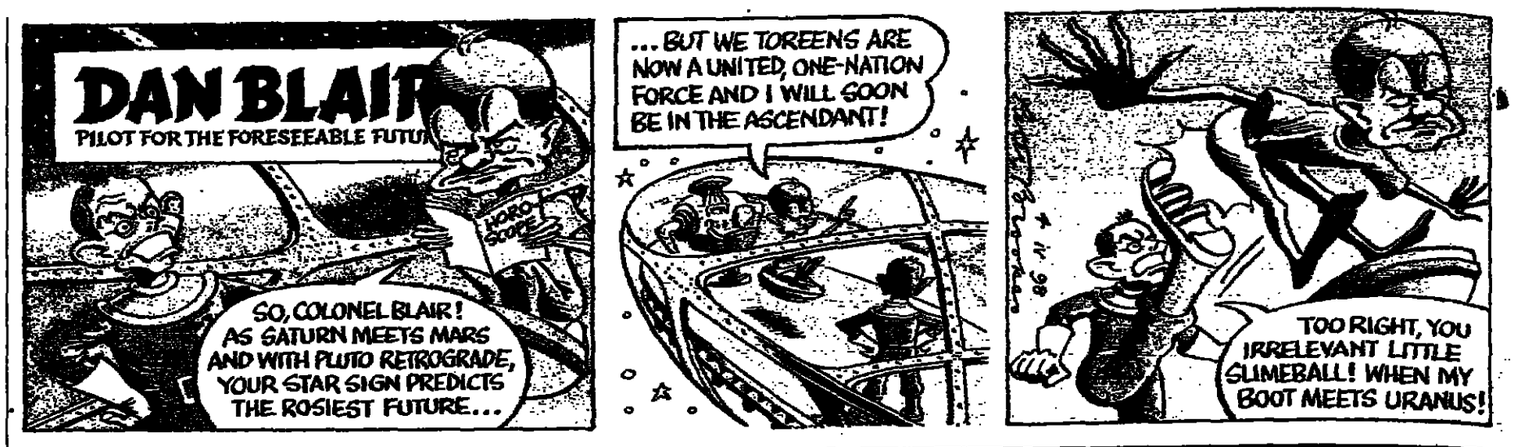
Q Many of my friends and acquaintances have a habit that drives me mad but they consider normal: they lick their fingers before turning over the pages of a newspaper or book, mostly with great gusto. I was brought up to believe that this was not only "non-U" but also extremely unhygienic. Why should I want to read a newspaper with someone else's spit all over it? — Name and address withheld.

A Finger-licking, unless you are a disciple of a certain American colonel in the catering trade, is, for both social and medical reasons, utterly unacceptable.

Q It is noticeable that even in upmarket hotels and restaurants a growing number of men now have dinner wearing open-neck shirts and no jackets. This is in marked contrast to their female companions, who are almost always elegantly attired. Is it unfashionable of me to find this slightly irritating or is it yet another example of deteriorating manners? — Deryck Burton, Fenstanton, Huntingdon.

A This phenomenon is not so much to do with declining manners as general confusion about what to wear. Many people simply do not know how to dress appropriately and genuinely seem oblivious to the fact that, if they are going out as a couple, it is not only sensible, but also more attractive to dress as if they belong to one another.

● *The author is Associate Editor of GQ.*



WORD WATCHING

by Philip Howard

GAWSY
a. Observant
b. Salty
c. Well-dressed

GROUZE
a. To munch
b. To make an error
c. To clean up

GRUNCH
a. To grind
b. To object
c. To hit

GUILLEMIN
a. A hermit
b. A sea-bird
c. Copper ring

Answers on page 39

TWO BRAINS

PRACTITIONERS of mind sports are fascinated by the relative difficulty of their different pastimes. According to my calculations the number of possible positions available in the most popular mind sports is as follows (Shogi is Japanese chess, ZiangQi is Chinese chess):

Go 10^{170}; Scrabble 10^{150}; Poker 10^{72}; Shogi 10^{70}; Chess 10^{50}; XiangQi 10^{50}; Bridge 10^{30}; Draughts 10^{20}; Backgammon 10^{19}.

Question 1:
Who is the odd one out in the following?
Hullcrich, Claimmlan, Lisnow, Crmellow, Lachagnal

Question 2:
Can you identify the following quotation:
"...a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat oppressed brain"?

Answers on page 39

CROSS WORDS

by Mike Laws

At last *The Daily Telegraph* has changed its mind about using computers to put together crossword clues and grids. I sympathise with Val Gilbert, the *Telegraph*'s crossword editor. Her reassurances for solvers two weeks ago on computerised input for her crossword series were appended to a text which smacked of a last-ditch attempt at justification.

The hint that repetition of solutions may have been noticed after "a couple of years or so" and that "one or two clues may have sounded familiar" betrayed ignorance of the logistics of crossword compiling. The combination of traditional grid-structure and English spelling inevitably generates typical alternate-letter combinations, leading to much earlier repetition of "fitting" vocabulary.

Familiar clues are also inevitable, given the "shape" of certain words. Compilers taking easy options should have been given specific guidelines, such as the ones circulated by Brian Greer, our own crossword editor. Gilbert herself does not compile, but Greer contributes weekly to our series and uses his wits to excise hackneyed clueing, rather than reaching for a digital panacea.

If recycling was to be "eliminated" to freshen the *Telegraph*'s puzzles, surely most of its solvers would have noticed a difference? And how could an "ever-increasing (sic) proportion of new clues and solutions" be squared with mathematical and lexicographic realities? Maybe the tip that "a simple change of tense" would demand new clues to verbs should have been offered to those who skimp by habitually cross-checking similar inflections.

I accept that Gilbert's motives were well-intentioned and for the benefit of *Telegraph* solvers, but I still believe that the problem was approached from the wrong angle. The solution to her dilemma has come from people, not machines. I wish her well in rehabilitating her disaffected team.

● *The writer is the Times' Jumbo crossword editor.*

PICTURE LINE



READERS are invited to suggest what *Coronation Street*'s Deidre Rachid (Anne Kirkbride) might be saying from behind her prison bars.

This picture will appear again next week with an entry chosen from those submitted.

Send "speech bubble" suggestions — only on postcards, please — with your name and address to PictureLine, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, E1 9XN.
The closing date is Wednesday, April 8.

Last week's winning caption, left, was submitted by Michael Birt, of Buckland, Worcestershire.



QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"Is this an April Fools joke?" — *President Clinton on hearing that Paula Jones sex harassment case had been dismissed*

"We get tragedies by the truckload." — *Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority boss explaining minimal award to Josie Russell after the hammer attack which killed her mother and sister*

"Nothing ever surprises me." — *Prime Minister's press secretary Alastair Campbell reacting to accusations that he was horrid to ministers*

"He was driving like a prat." — *Jason Humble, allegedly, on the man he is accused of killing by shunting his car into oncoming traffic*

"I would be horrified if a tin-pot company treated an employee like this." — *Frank Field MP, on Westminster Abbey's suspension of organist Dr Martin Neary*

"Her fate is a lesson to us all." — *Fraser Kemp MP joins the campaign to free Coronation Street's Deirdre from jail*

"That was one hell of a result tonight." — *Leeds United player after the team's plane crashlanded*

"No one can knock the curry restaurant sector ... and be taken seriously." — *Tandoori magazine's fulsome apology for calling Indian waiters "miserable gits"*

"My other car is a BMW too." — *Sign on a Rolls-Royce in a cartoon by Austen in* The Guardian

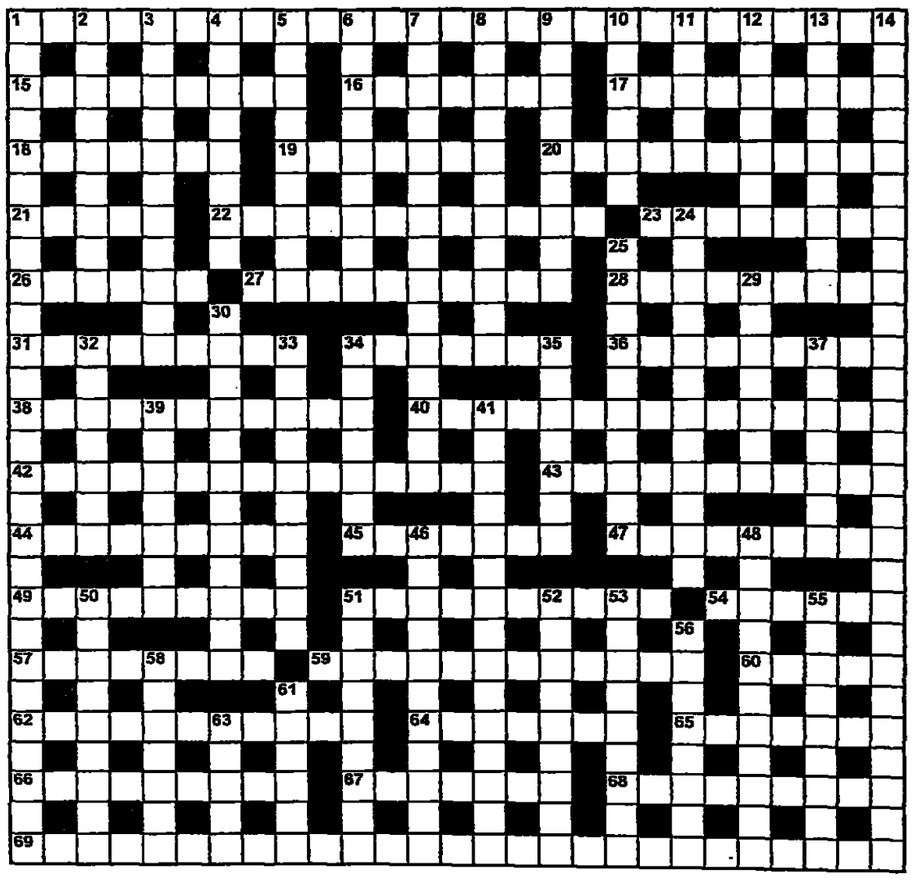
"We are not suckers." — *Israeli Prime Minister explains his decision not to revive the Middle East peace process*

"This is not a time to give in to short-term pressures." — *Chancellor Gordon Brown replying to complaints about the strength of sterling*

JUMBO CROSSWORD 158



The prize for the first correct solution to be opened will be a collection of five Oxford University Press titles, the world's most trusted reference books, valued at more than £100. Included are *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* and *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Quotations*. Entries should be sent to: Jumbo Crossword 158, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN to arrive by Thursday, April 16. The name of the winner will be published in Weekend on April 18



NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

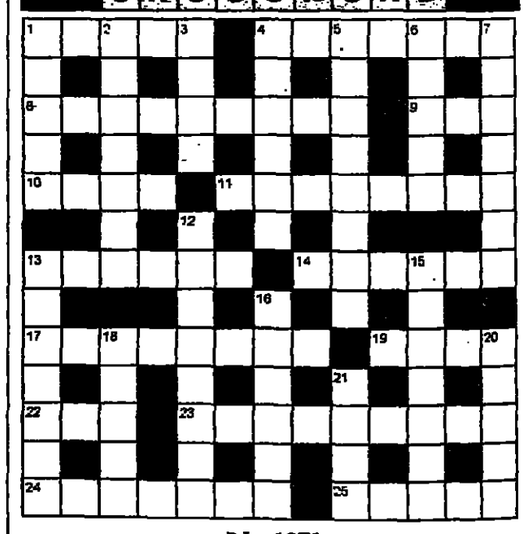
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..... POSTCODE .....

ACROSS
1 Personal offer of new accompaniment for a woman's song? (3,4,3,4,5,8)
15 Still living where the coffin's found (2,3,4)
16 Run more wildly, being keener (7)
17 Bent bar keeper detective's run in more than once (5-4)
18 Roman emperor's beheaded in Spain (7)
19 I am backing organisation, showing attributes (7)
20 New futon's imported even if it's not previously considered (9,2)
21 Heather's a girl's name (5)
22 Bias papers, affecting tories' dailies mostly (12)
23 Panel going into Mark for unusual vehicle (5-3)
26 Component for rib and even parts of joist's design (6)
27 What are usual when beginning school buildings? (10)
28 I will cure this, getting rid of one's sickness (3,6)
31 Bridge players taking pity, abolishing charge to circle (9)
34 Woodcutter supports a wife (7)
36 Is phone-tapping an oddly silent offence? (7,2)
38 They may get ready when going to the continent (11)
40 In a divided state (15)
42 Cheshire "Celeste" turned out to be a variety of cheddar (9,6)
43 Ancient burial place — for queens? (7,4)
44 It takes some a nerve going into this orbit (3,6)
45 Group with a hundred pirouetting marks a record in ballet? (7)
47 A long drawn-out meal (9)
49 I hate meat stews as a source of iron (9)
51 Navigation aids — as salt bore at sea (10)
54 A name held by particular type of food — imported? (6)
57 Broadcast the material they offer, when reviewing demesnes? (8)
59 Duke, English, note, descended a hill to march away 10,000 men? (12)
60 Quick to take advantage on returning transport (5)
62 Restriction applied to members on retirement (5-3,3)
64 Again escape from bank's hold concerning offer on stock market (7)
65 What's essential for determining limits of travel? (7)
66 I can time the first and last run round circuit (9)
67 Settle dispute with answer right away — a measure of efficient communication (3-4)
68 Having information on hit *As Time Goes By*? (9)
69 Nomination for adventurous follow-up to 14? (5,3,3,5,4,7)

DOWN
1 An ideal choice for *Desert Island Discs*? (1,2,4,2,2,6,3,7)
2 Draws fish-eater into places of concealment (9)
3 Imported novelty mini-cameras, possibly (11)
4 Proclaimed accused must lose head (8)
5 Concerning dreadful film, it is prohibited (3-6)
6 Many more than one in this form may be heard! (9)
7 Ben Wheeler (8,7)
8 Relatives and friends — they'll take a few knocks (4,7)
9 Do they result from high explosives? (9)
10 90's a number replaced by 100 for accuracy (6)
11 Two states joined in historic mission (5)
12 Go and pay — he's supplied revised *Chambers* (7)
13 Eccentric new production of King Lear Act I (9)
14 Significance of a number being enlightened, having heard the Ten Commandments? (4,3,3,4,6,7)
24 Working on collapsing tube lines (12)
25 Inventory held by users of rasps and planes (10)
29 Take up and make appear on the radio? (7)
30 Dad's broken fine kettle that's used in the kitchen (7,5)
32 Small boat caught by infallible guide? (7)
33 Formal bribe given to newspaperman (6-4)
34 Region of France King Henry captured by sheltered moorings (3-4)
35 King of Israel brought in mostly prudent and strict Muslims (7)
37 Make last *Home and Away*? What's the odds on that! (4,3)
39 Rome can get represented as an Italian city (7)
41 What could one charge — taking a shot in the dark? (10,5)
46 With everyone playing grass gets pulled up — it's over frozen course (5-6)
48 What might leave Earth in great distress (11)
50 Cancelling duty for former eastern porcelain lying around port (9)
51 Goal for one during friendly showing potential for improvement (9)
52 When you might clearly see rock bottom? (2,1,3,3)
53 Disgraceful articles about one can be disputatious (9)
55 Put as it is in *Alice*? (9)
56 Rodent and Ox perhaps, and where they are in the Chinese zodiac? (4-4)
58 Radiation measure is always given in SI terms at first (7)
61 Target of protest (6)
63 State of one daughter half an hour old (5)

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1371

ACROSS
1 *Heathen (5)*
4 Show nervousness, having these (7)
8 Magnified, blown up (4,5)
9 Information *(slang)*(3)
10 Mature (4)
11 Renounce (8)
13 Meat pin (6)
14 Rather dirty (6)
17 (Am. Ind.) hatchet (8)
19 Stopper (4)
22 Miserable (3)
23 Purchasing by post (4,5)
24 One burnt at Christmas (4,3)
25 Song of lament (5)

DOWN
1 *Strength (5)*
2 Brief view (7)
3 *Little* girl *(Dickens)*: Charles II's favourite (4)
4 Special, barbarous, language (6)
5 Valuables store: finance ministry (8)
6 Keen-eyed bird of prey (5)
7 Whole-more-than-parts effect (7)
12 Thick white onion (sauce) (8)
13 Meet (requirement) (7)
15 One jumping along: cad *(old slang)* (7)
16 Canvas shade (6)
18 Disc as prize, award (5)
20 Stuff oneself: a ravine (5)
21 Noisy; tasteless (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1370

ACROSS: 2 Gorgeous 6 Mercia 8 Ordeal 9 Tranche 10 Santa 12 Take fright 16 Paddy field 18 Lists 20 Indulge 21 Uneven 22 Sleuth 23 Expedite
DOWN: 1 Beer-mat 2 Gathered 3 Garish 4 Ocean 5 Sy(l)van 7 Contempt 11 Attitude 13 Guyanese 14 Flighty 15 Clause 17 Ascend 19 Steep

THE TIMES BOOKSHOP

NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE!

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To order simply call 0990 134 459 for credit card orders or for further details. If paying by cheque/PO(s) please make payable to News Books/Crosswords and send to: The Times Bookshop, PO Box 345, Falmouth, TR11 2YY. Delivery in 10-14 days and subject to availability.